宗像教授伝奇考

【第三集】

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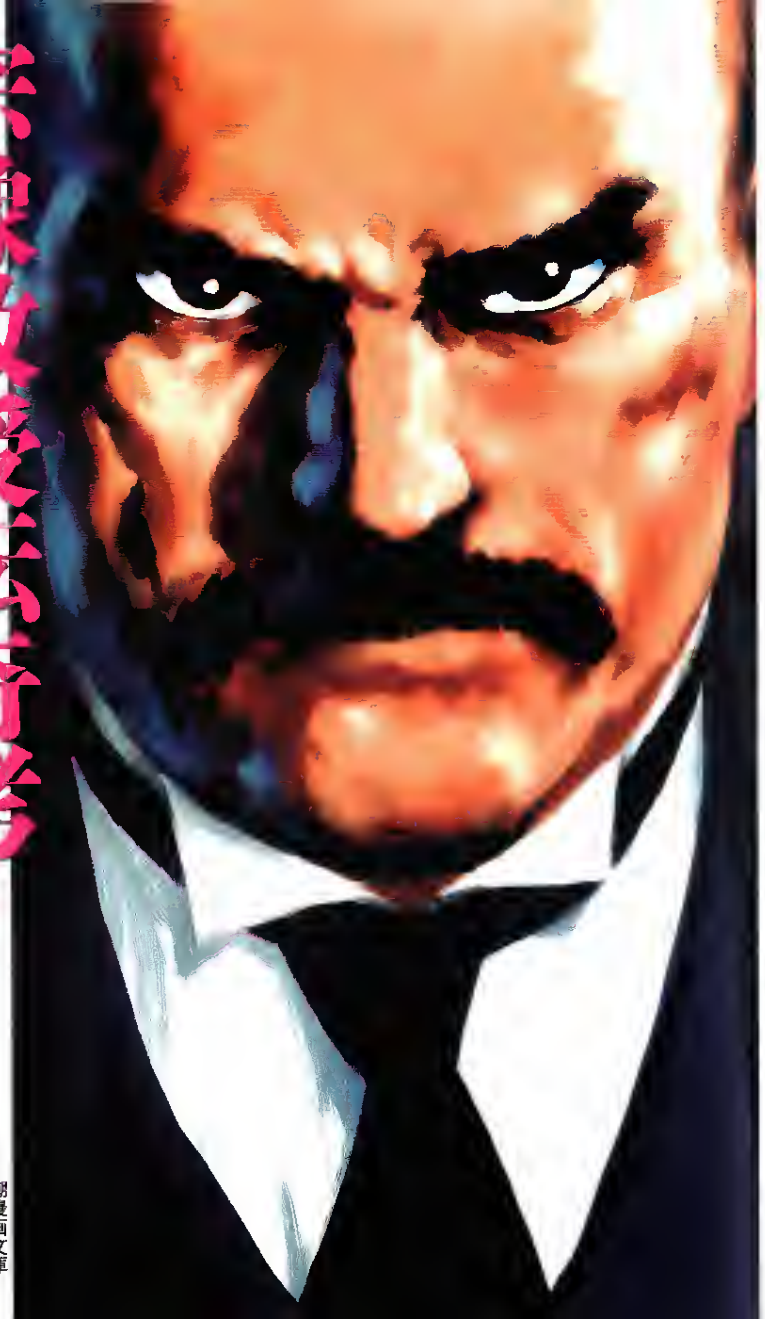

星野之宣

Hoshino Yukinobu

潮漫画文庫

宗像教授伝奇考

【第三集】

星野之宣

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比叡山を追い出され大江山に住む酒呑童子。
悪逆の限りを尽くし、
最大の仏敵「第六天の魔王」と断罪される…。
酒呑童子伝説の深い闇を考察する
宗像教授は、〝現場〟で謎の老僧から
衝撃的物証を示される。

〈酒呑童子異聞〉より

❖星野之宣❖

一九五四年一月二十九日、北海道帯広市に生まれる。愛知県立芸大中退。
一九七五年「鋼鉄のクイーン」でデビューし、同年「はるかなる朝」で手塚賞受賞。
以来、宇宙、海洋、伝奇、SF等、スケールの大きい本格派SF漫画家として活躍。
徹底した取材と科学的知識に基づく、卓抜なアイディア、壮大で緻密なストーリー、
繊細なペンタッチが多くの読者をひきつけている。
代表作に、「妖女伝説」「2001夜物語」「ヤマタイカ」「ブルーホール」
「未来の二つの顔」「メガクロス」「宗像教授伝奇考」など多数。

BOOK DESIGN❖TAKAHASHI JUNZI

既刊大好評発売中!!

❖星野之宣の本❖

◉希望コミックス
「宗像教授伝奇考」1〜6巻・特別版

◉潮漫画文庫
「ヤマタイカ」全5巻

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

VOLUME 3

HOSHINO YUKINOBU

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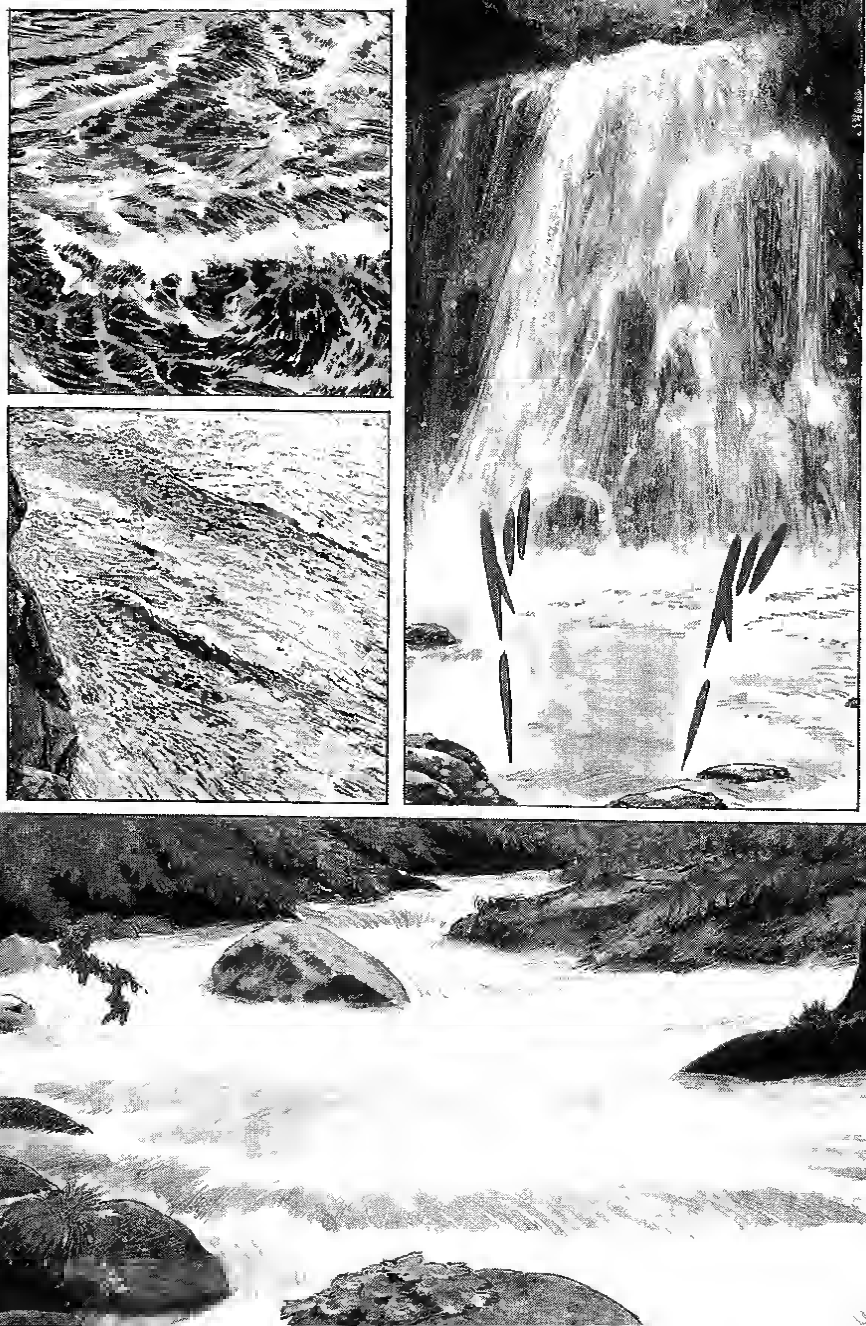
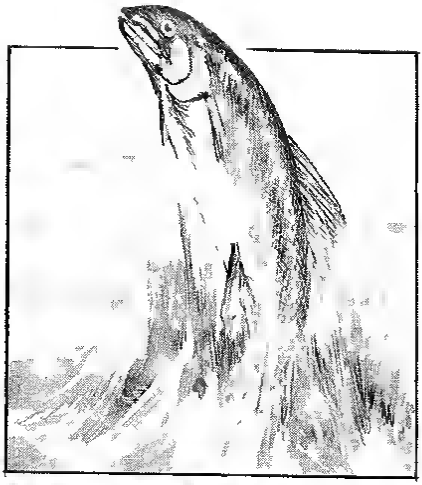
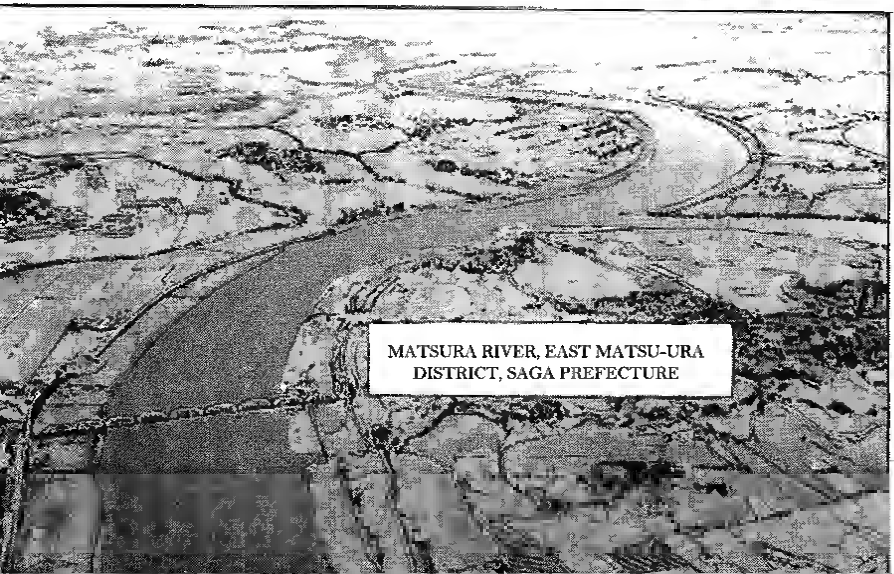
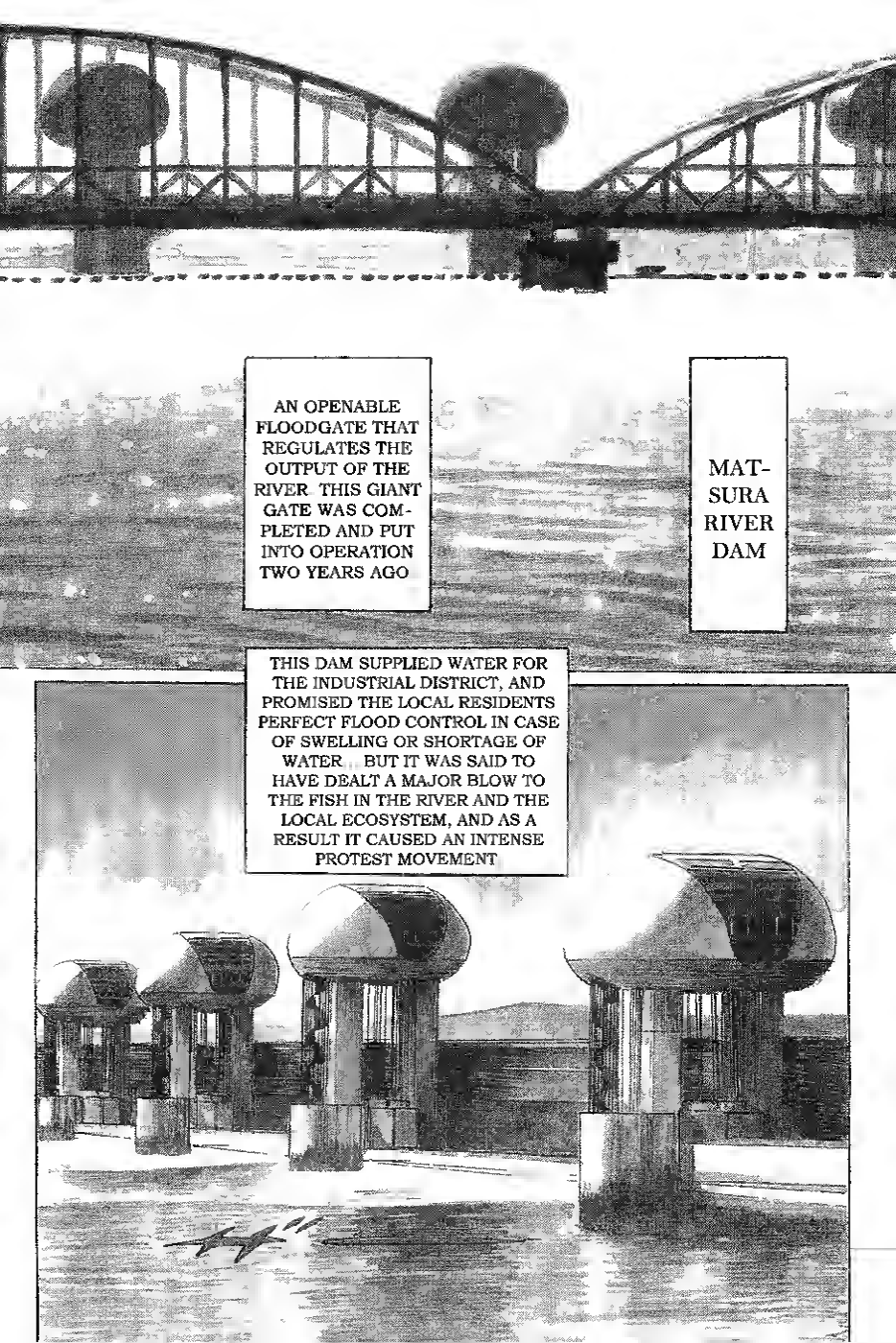
FILE 13: SAYOHIME'S RIVER

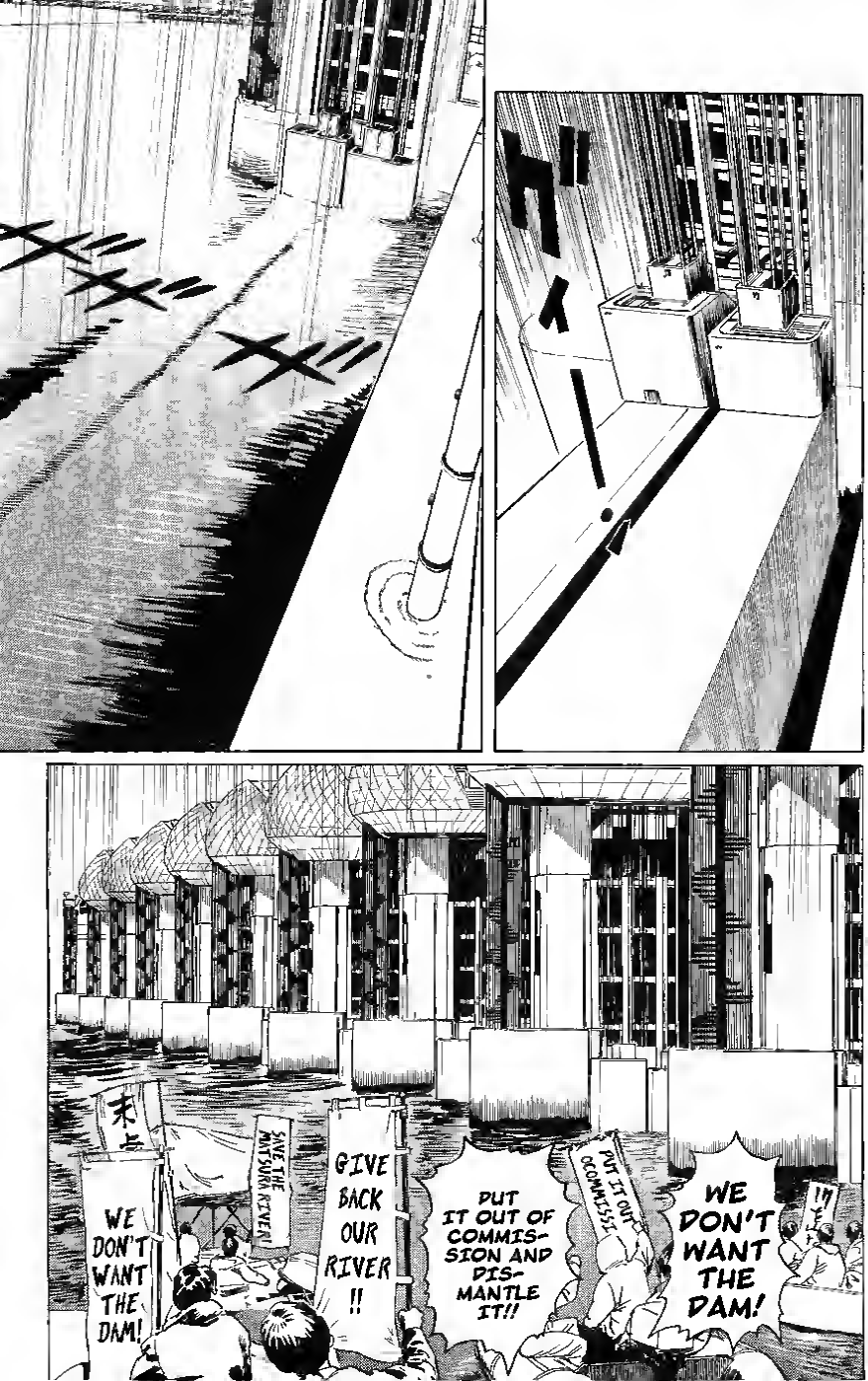






MATSURA RIVER, EAST MATSU-URA DISTRICT, SAGA PREFECTURE


AN OPENABLE FLOODGATE THAT REGULATES THE OUTPUT OF THE RIVER. THIS GIANT GATE WAS COMPLETED AND PUT INTO OPERATION TWO YEARS AGO
MAT-SURA RIVER DAM
THIS DAM SUPPLIED WATER FOR THE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT, AND PROMISED THE LOCAL RESIDENTS PERFECT FLOOD CONTROL IN CASE OF SWELLING OR SHORTAGE OF WATER... BUT IT WAS SAID TO HAVE DEALT A MAJOR BLOW TO THE FISH IN THE RIVER AND THE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM, AND AS A RESULT IT CAUSED AN INTENSE PROTEST MOVEMENT

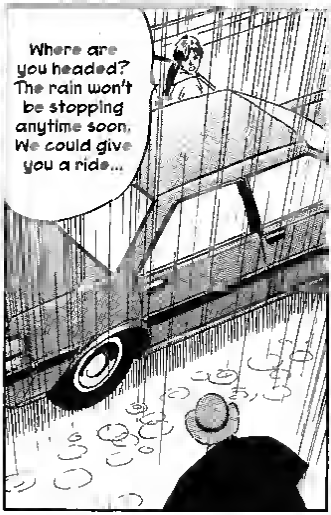

WE DON'T WANT THE DAM!
末止
SAVE THE MITSUKA RIVER!
GIVE BACK OUR RIVER !!
PUT IT OUT OF COMMIS-SION AND DIS-MANTLE IT!!
PUT IT OUT OCCOMMISSS
WE DON'T WANT THE DAM!

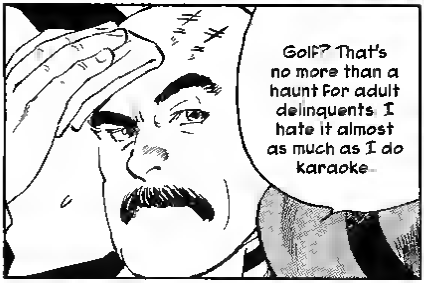
WE DON'T WANT A DAM THAT KILLS THE MATSURA RIVER!!
THE DAM BRINGS US ALL PAIN WITH NO GAIN! IT'S A WASTE OF TAX DOLLARS !!
PROTECT THE RIVER!!!
YEAHHHH!
THANKS FOR KEEPING THIS UP IN THE RAIN! I'LL SEE YOU ALL TOMORROW!
THE RIVER BASIN RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION WILL BE GOING OUT TO COLLECT SIGNATURES!

I'm not giving up!
Start the car, Yanagawa!
Until that dam is gone!
But the second anniversary celebration is tomorrow...
Miss Amamiya Sae, the dam has been operating for a while now. How long do you plan on leading this protest group?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT!? MISS AMAMIYA'S THE JOAN OF ARC OF THE MATSURA RIVER!
Well, she's persistent alright. I guess the women of Saga have the malice of the monster cat of Nabeshima..
.....

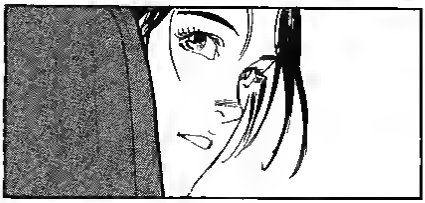
Mt. Tenzan, Saga Prefecture
(Elevation 1046m)
But that said, you need to get some rest, Miss Amamiya. Please, go get your checkup tomorrow.
It's been raining for a whole week now. The river level's risen two meters, and if an avalanche happens up the mountain...
Alright!?
Yes, Fine.
Nakajima Island is 0 meters above sea level, and the embankments have been broken down time and time again. Now that the dam is there, the river will have nowhere to go, and will flood the river basin!

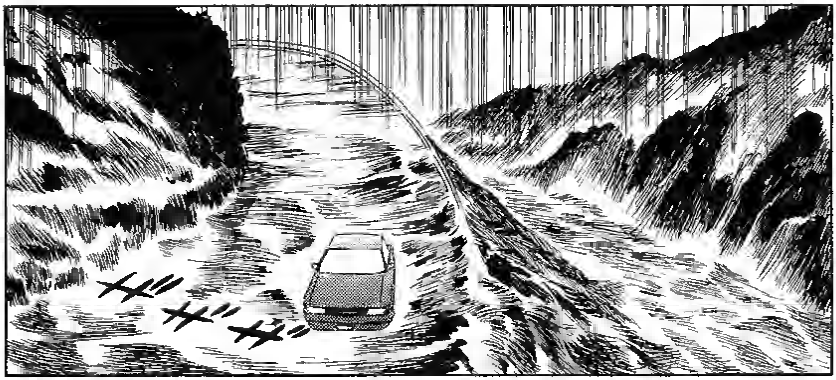
I'm sorry to say this, but it's progressing quickly. She has a year at best...

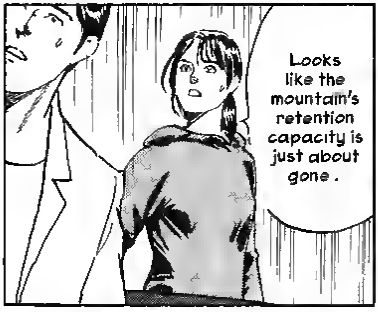

Where are you headed? The rain won't be stopping anytime soon. We could give you a ride...


Golf? That's no more than a haunt for adult delinquents. I hate it almost as much as I do karaoke.

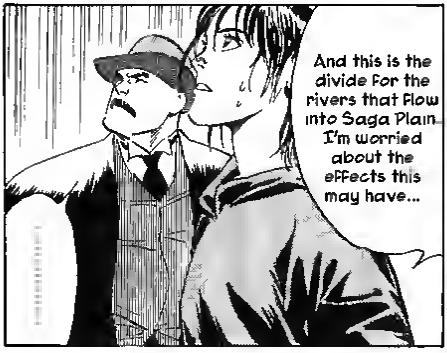
Thank you. You're really helping me out.
I know they've built a golf course up on Mt. Tenzan now, but you don't look like you're here for that.

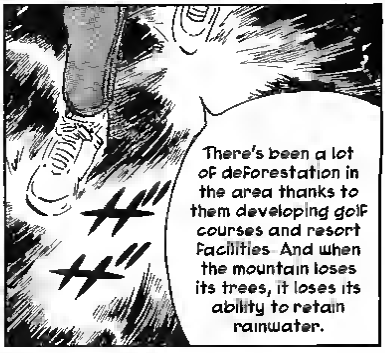




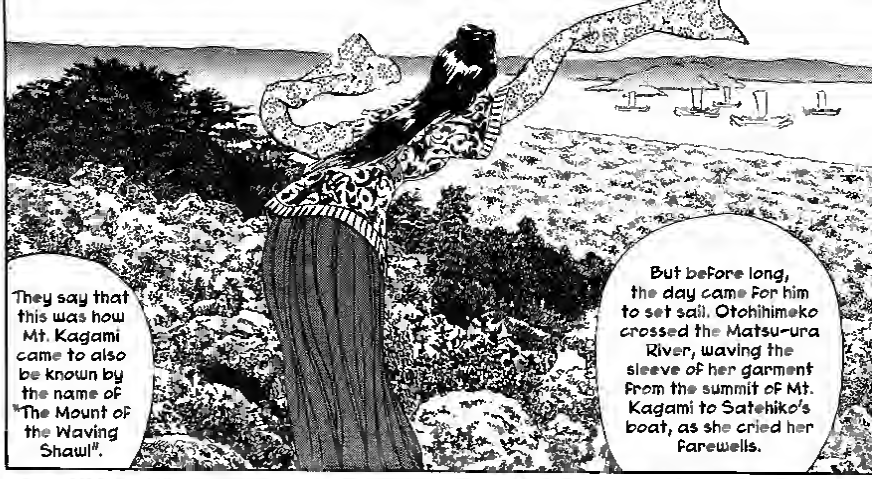

Looks like the mountain's retention capacity is just about gone.

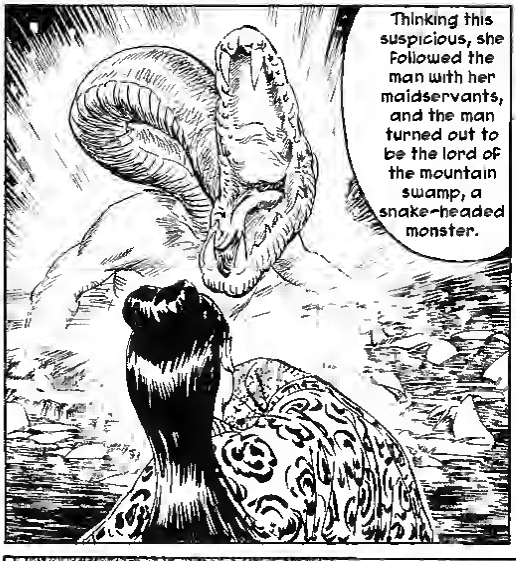
Retention capacity?

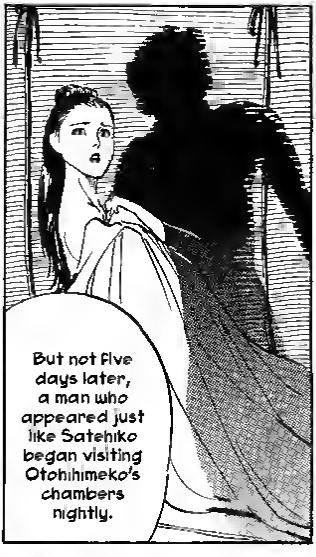

And this is the divide for the rivers that flow into Saga Plain. I'm worried about the effects this may have...

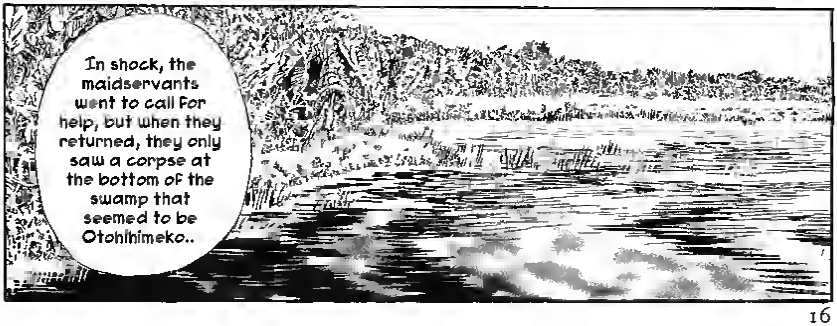

There's been a lot of deforestation in the area thanks to them developing golf courses and resort facilities. And when the mountain loses its trees, it loses its ability to retain rainwater.

I've never heard of a megalith here before, Professor Munakata. What did you come to Mt. Tenzan for, anyway?
Do you suppose we can climb to the summit? I thought there may be a megalith of some kind up there...
Matsura Sayohime?
I was just visiting my hometown in Fukuoka, so I thought I'd come out here to look into the legend of Matsura Sayohime while I was in the area.
There was a beautiful maiden named Otohihimeko in this land, and she fell in love with a noble named Otomo-no-Satehiko, who came to the land to depart for war in the Korean peninsula during the reign of Emperor Senka.
It originated right here, in the East Matsu-ura District of Saga. In the chapter on Matsura District of the "Chronicles of Hizen Province", there is the following story.


They say that this was how Mt. Kagami came to also be known by the name of "The Mount of the Waving Shawl".
But before long, the day came for him to set sail. Otohihimeko crossed the Matsu-ura River, waving the sleeve of her garment from the summit of Mt. Kagami to Satehiko's boat, as she cried her farewells.


Thinking this suspicious, she followed the man with her maidservants, and the man turned out to be the lord of the mountain swamp, a snake-headed monster.


But not five days later, a man who appeared just like Satehiko began visiting Otohihimeko's chambers nightly.


In shock, the maidservants went to call for help, but when they returned, they only saw a corpse at the bottom of the swamp that seemed to be Otohihimeko..

The Man'yoshu has the following poem: "Sayohime of Matsura waved her shawl, wishing that the boat travelling through the sea wouldst return"
Satehiko's name also appears in the Nihon Shoki, and he appears to be a historical figure from the sixth century, but Otohihimeko seems to have originally been called "Sayohime".
A different legend states that Sayohime was so overcome by grief after seeing Satehiko off, that she turned to stone.
There is a stone in the middle of the Matsura River called the Sayohime Stone, but this is most likely referring to the "Husband-Waiting Stone" that some say still remains on the summit of the mountain.
Hmm... That's just it. The legend of Sayohime spread throughout the country, but all these legends have two things in common.
They are a connection to water or a river, and the stone!
But Professor Munakata, Mt. Kagami is a small mountain in the east of Karatsu! So what does the legend of Sayohime have to do with Mt. Tenzan...?

In Tohoku, there is a legend of a woman named "Osayo" who was bought from Kyoto and offered as a sacrifice to the god of water. There are several stones that Osayo was said to have sat on to do her makeup in a number of places.
In Kyushu, there is a tradition that during the construction of a dam in Mii, Chikugo, a young maiden named "Osayo" was wrapped in a straw sack and thrown to the bottom of the sea to serve as a human pillar.
If that's so...
The Sayohime that fell victim to the swamp lord was passed down all across the nation as a human pillar or sacrifice to protect against flooding!
If my imagination is correct, then we should find...
Then the mountain most fitting for Sayohime of the Matsura River to subside on is Mt. Tenzan, the river's source. This mountain may have been the original Mount of the Waving Shawl.

Well, it seems we've stumbled upon one of those despicable golf courses.
Something seems off...

Heheh..
I'm truly sorry about the unfortunate weather..
No matter. The green here has good drainage, and it's actually rather fun to hit a shot while drenched in the spring rain. Isn't that right, Mr Maruzeni?
That man next to him is his flunky, Sodeshita Wataru, Minister of Construction.
You mean the one they call the don of the construction lobbyists?
That's the vice-president of the ruling party, Maruzeni Suketomo!

THEY'RE ALL THE PEOPLE WHO IMPLEMENTED THE MATSURA RIVER DAM!
Then there's the president of Hizen Construction, Dan Goroku, and the one bowing profusely is Inari Hyokichi, mayor of Nakajima!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!? THIS COURSE IS UNDER SPECIAL GUARD! LEAVE HERE AT ONCE!
You're right. They may be all here for the anniversary tomorrow.
NICE SHOT!

We don't want any casualties among the river basin residents, either. That'll only give the opposition reason to object.
Even if all the embankments break down, the dam won't budge an inch!
Don't be preposterous, Mr. Maruzen!
The rain should let up by tomorrow, but I sincerely hope the flooding won't destroy the dam. You haven't been cutting corners on the construction, have you?
NO MATTER WHO COMPLAINS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT OR FLOODING!
I SET MY MIND ON THIS IRRIGATION PROJECT BACK WHEN I WAS MINISTER OF CONSTRUCTION. I WON'T STOP TILL IT'S COMPLETE, EVEN IF I HAVE TO REMOLD A MOUNTAIN OR A RIVER TO DO IT!
We've done the levee protection works with solid concrete! The Matsura River is no longer a river, but an irrigation ditch!
You're exactly right! That'll make us all prosper in the end!

The don of the construction lobbyists, a bureaucrat who parachuted to serve as president of a contractor, and a local mayor sponging off of their money under the pretext of compensation.
They've sunk two hundred billion yen in tax money into the dam-building project. No wonder those misers would flock to it.
I'm starting to hate golf all the more.
What they've ignored is the feelings and safety of the residents of the river basin, and the lives of the mountain and river themselves...

I'm working as a photographer in Karatsu right now, but I was born and raised by that river...
The weak shouldn't have to serve as human sacrifices for those in authority in this day and age.
The people of the river basin all play in the river, use the river's water for cooking and laundry, and live off the fish granted by the river.

If the river dies, they will lose everything that is old and beautiful... And I won't let that happen, no matter what!
I'm sorry to say this, but she has a year at best...
My life...
Please, don't die!
Please don't die, Matsura River.

Good morning! How did you like the Matsura Riverside Hotel?
I heard the river rushing all night long... Good morning! Where's Sae?

I don't know much about it, but she said it's an ovarian disease...
Is she not feeling well?
I just took her to the hospital.
Yanagawa, you're a photographer's assistant who's also participating in the protest activities, aren't you? Shouldn't you be with her instead of me?
...Hmm...
Yes, the river has visibly risen since yesterday...
It's almost like the Matsura River is Sae's lover.
No, she was worried about the river, so she told me to check on Mt. Tenzan again.
Haha...

THERE'S BEEN A SLUMP!
I GUESS IT FINALLY GAVE OUT... PROFESSOR MUNAKATA !?

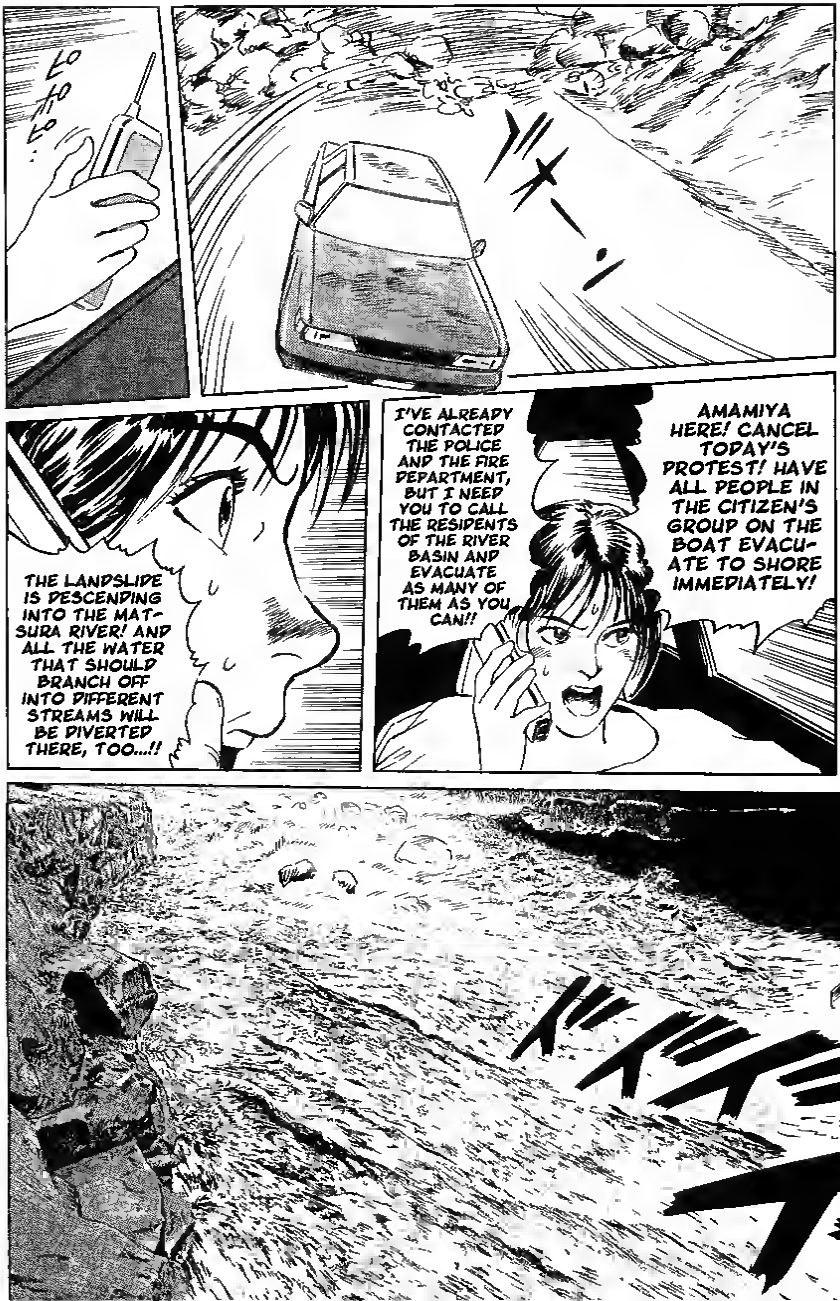
Huuuh !?
The Husband-Waiting Stone...!

Some say that the "Sayo" of Sayohime comes from "Sae-no-Kami"
Look! There are faint traces of talismanic rope around it...
No, that megalith may be Matsura Sayohime herself... It had been partially buried until the slump revealed it!
Sae-no-Kami refers to gods who protect borders, such as guardian deities of travellers, but tracing it back, it refers to the giant stone Izanagi used to seal the dead inside the Land of Yomi.
SAE ...!?
THAT MEANS THAT THIS MEGALITH, WHICH SEALS IN THE UNDERGROUND WATER AND DIVIDES THE RIVER'S FLOW, WAS WORSHIPPED AS SAYOHIME, THE ONE WHO CALMS THE WATER GOD!

The ground's already been weakened! It might fall again on a much larger scale! It's too dangerous to stay here, Professor Munakata!
I didn't get checked. I had a horrible nightmare last night, and I just had to come here myself...
A nightmare? You're not...!

PRO-
FESSOR
MUNA-
KATA!

ドドドド
A LAND-SLIDE...!!


LO HO LO
AMAMIYA HERE! CANCEL TODAY'S PROTEST! HAVE ALL PEOPLE IN THE CITIZEN'S GROUP ON THE BOAT EVACUATE TO SHORE IMMEDIATELY!
I'VE ALREADY CONTACTED THE POLICE AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, BUT I NEED YOU TO CALL THE RESIDENTS OF THE RIVER BASIN AND EVACUATE AS MANY OF THEM AS YOU CAN!!
THE LANDSLIDE IS DESCENDING INTO THE MATSURA RIVER! AND ALL THE WATER THAT SHOULD BRANCH OFF INTO DIFFERENT STREAMS WILL BE DIVERTED THERE, TOO...!!

THERE'S A LANDSLIDE COMING! EVACUATE, NOW!
THE EMBANK-MENTS ARE AT RISK, TOO! RUN!!

KCH...
S... SAE! COME BACK!

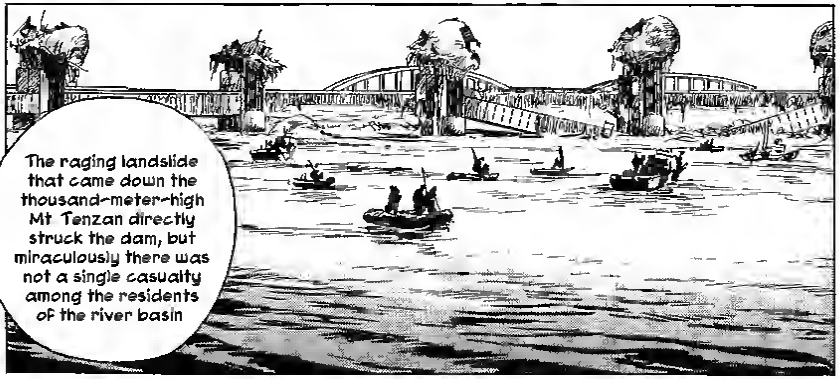
……
ﾊﾞﾌｯ
!
SAE!!

Take my life...
Take my diseased life in exchange for the residents of the river basin...
Please, save them!

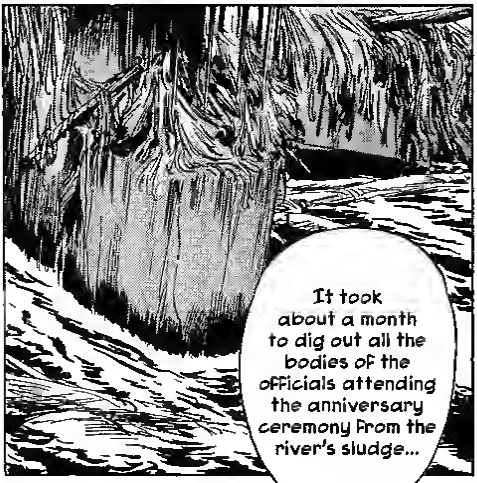
SAEEEEEE!!
ドドドド
グオオオ

And now for a word from Mr. Maruzeni Suketomo...

WAAAUGH...


The raging landslide that came down the thousand-meter-high Mt Tenzan directly struck the dam, but miraculously there was not a single casualty among the residents of the river basin

But the opposition leader, Amamiya Sae, still remains missing...

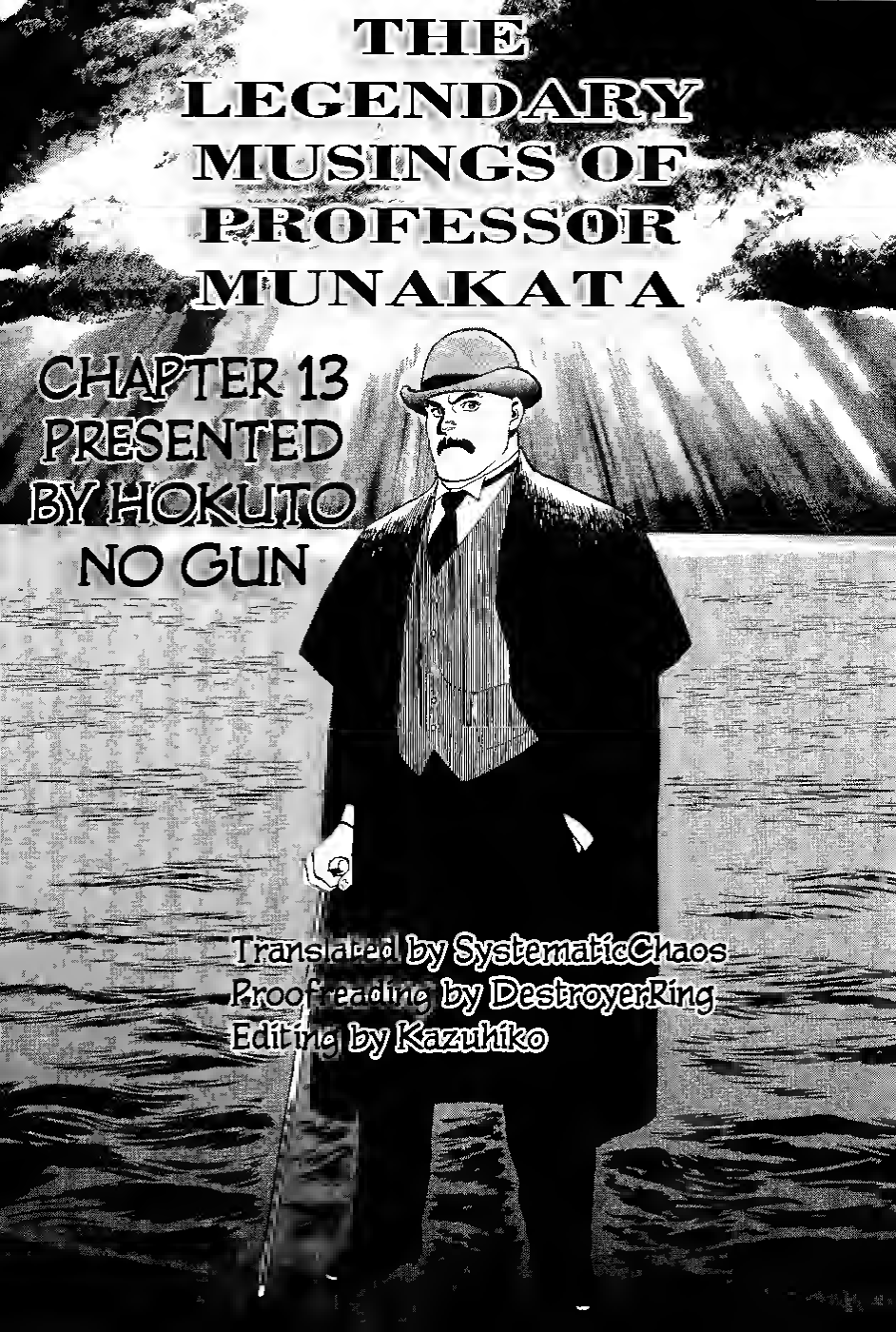

It took about a month to dig out all the bodies of the officials attending the anniversary ceremony from the river's sludge...

The unsightly remains of the dam will eventually be dismantled, and the clear waters of the Matsura River will return once more.
And I believe that this is how legends are passed down..
That the legend of Sayohime may yet again be revived with new life...

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 13

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



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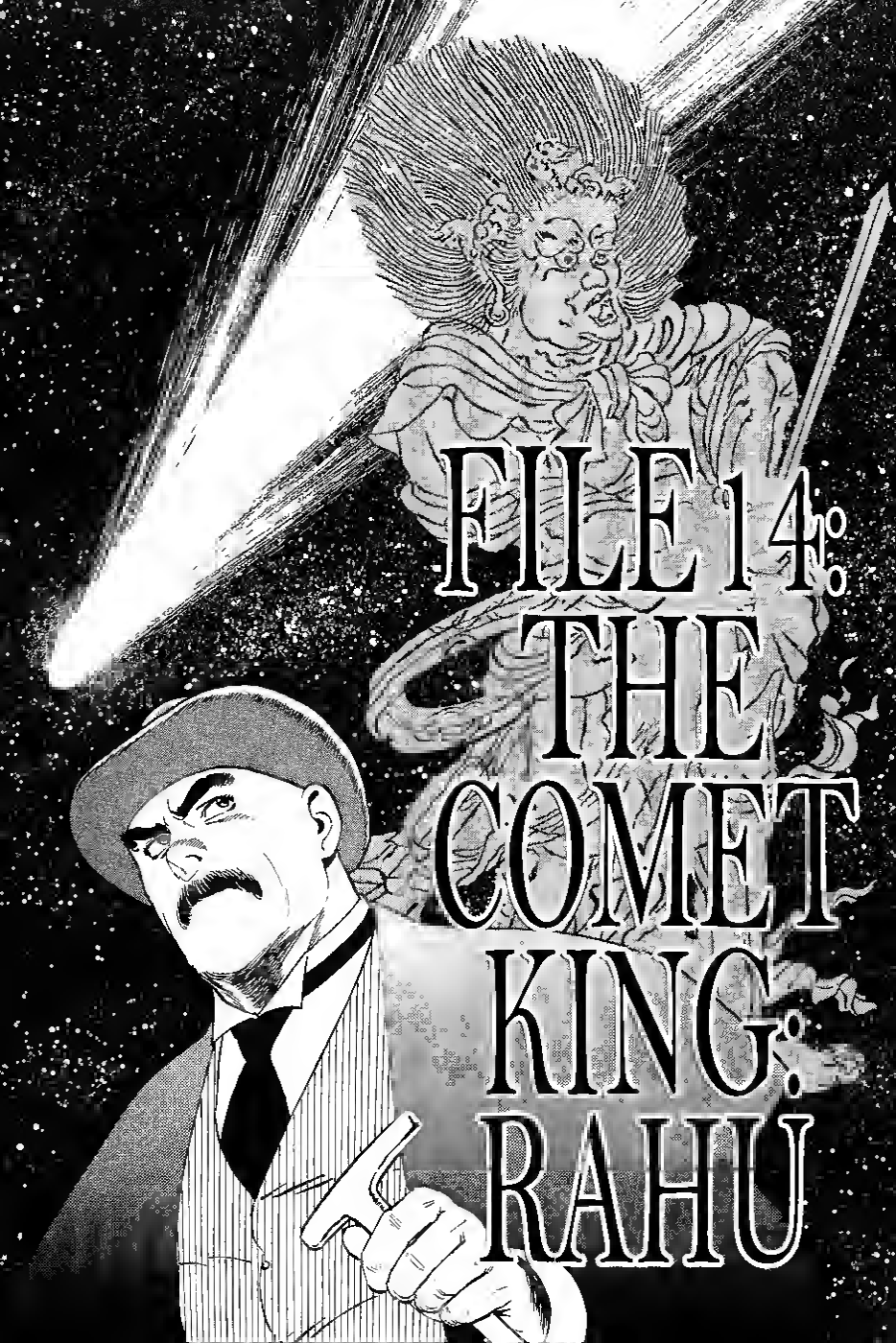
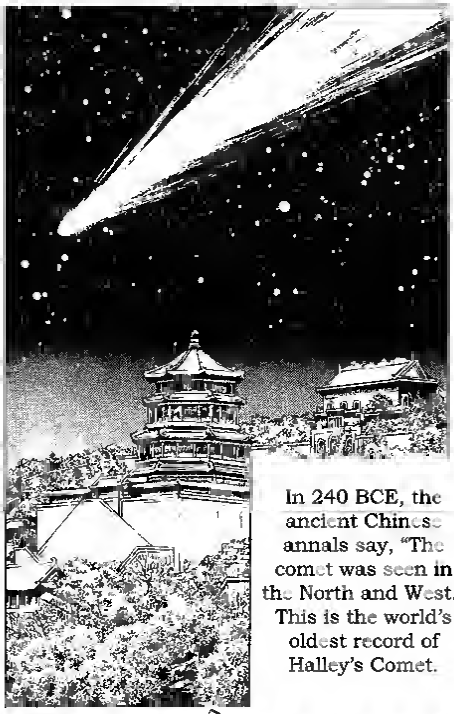
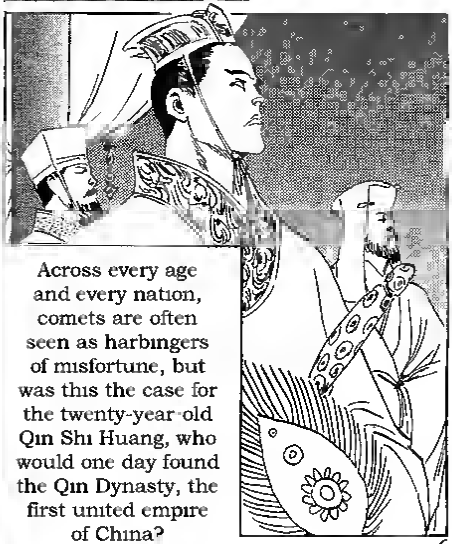
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

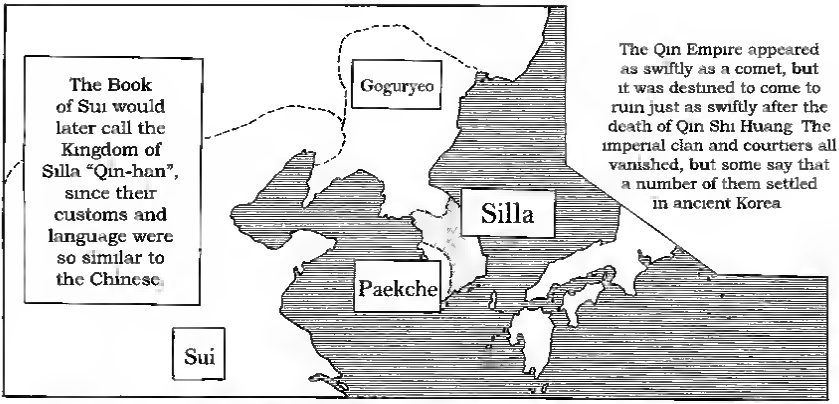

FILE 14:
THE
COMET
KING:
RAHU



In 240 BCE, the ancient Chinese annals say, "The comet was seen in the North and West." This is the world's oldest record of Halley's Comet.

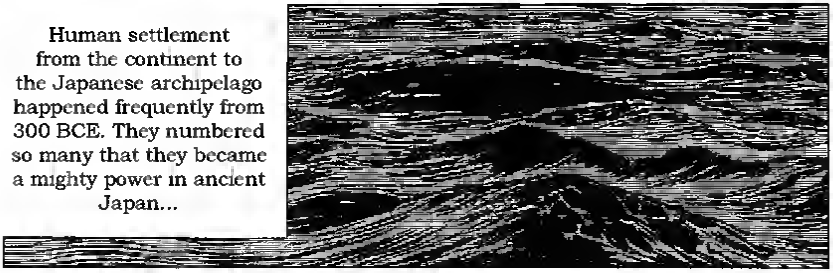


Across every age and every nation, comets are often seen as harbingers of misfortune, but was this the case for the twenty-year-old Qin Shi Huang, who would one day found the Qin Dynasty, the first united empire of China?


The Book of Sui would later call the Kingdom of Silla "Qin-han", since their customs and language were so similar to the Chinese.
Goguryeo
Silla
Paekche
Sui

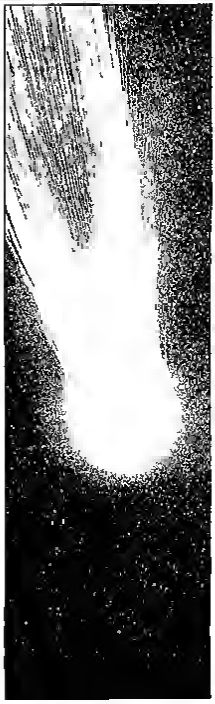
The Qin Empire appeared as swiftly as a comet, but it was destined to come to ruin just as swifly after the death of Qin Shi Huang. The imperial clan and courtiers all vanished, but some say that a number of them settled in ancient Korea

Human settlement from the continent to the Japanese archipelago happened frequently from 300 BCE. They numbered so many that they became a mighty power in ancient Japan...



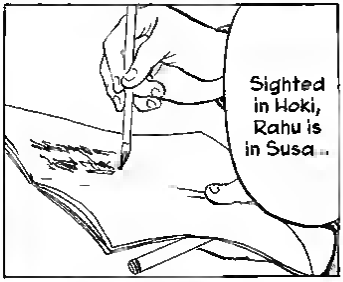
The "Hata" Clan, who called themselves descendants of Qin Shi Huang...
The oldest and the most powerful among them were the Sillan settlers...

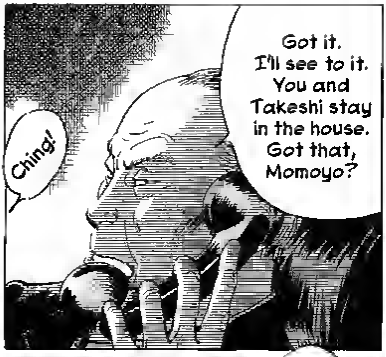
Meiji year 43 (1910)
Izumo



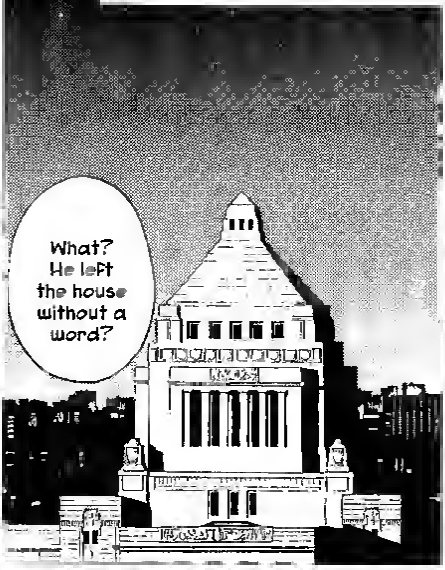
Halley's Comet in Daisen, Hoki...

Now back to Wakayama. I must find Ketu...


Sighted in Hoki, Rahu is in Susa..



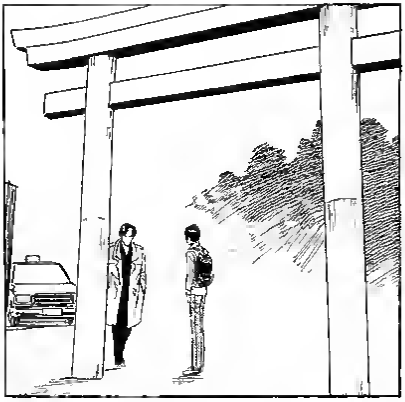
Showa year 61 (1986)



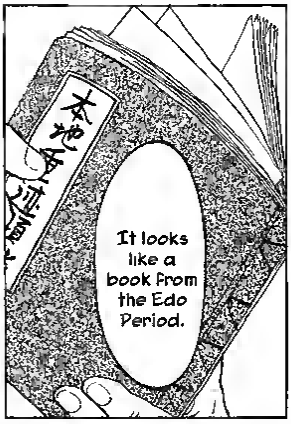
Present Day
Susa, Hikawa District,
Tottori Prefecture
What a coincidence. I was thinking of stopping by Susa Shrine myself.
Yes... But I'm meeting up with someone here at Susa Shrine...
So you're from middle school? Are you travelling alone?
Oh, I know of Susanoo! He killed the Yamata-no-Orochi, didn't he?
But what a narrow ravine this is... Susa is said to be the birthplace of Susanoo... though I guess they don't teach that in middle school.

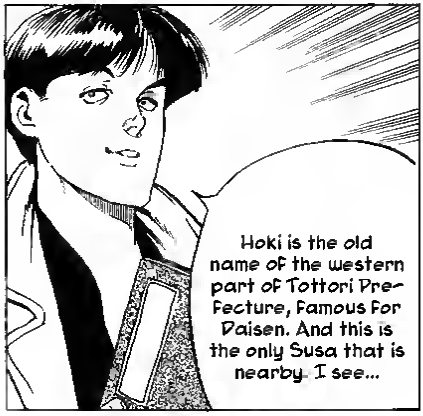
須佐
Hahaha! You know a lot, don't you...
Oh? Then how about the myth of the Ama-no-Iwato?
That's where Susanoo was running riot throughout Heaven, so the sun goddess Amaterasu hid in a cave and plunged the world into darkness...
Thank you..
I'm going to pay my respects. Take care, now...

So, you're Hata Takeshi.. Did you bring it?
Yes, I took it from my father's library...

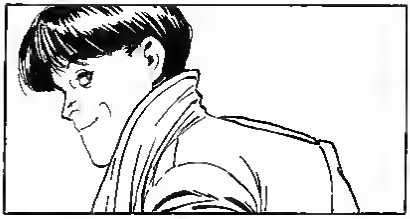


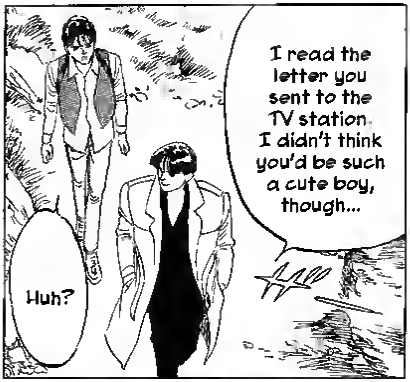
伯耆見ユ
羅睺ハ須佐ニ
計都ハ紀伊
Sighted in Hoki, Rahu is in Susa, and Ketu in Kii... Hmm?

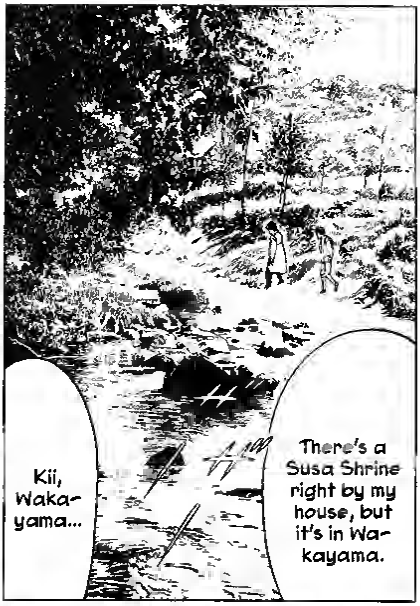

It looks like a book from the Edo Period.

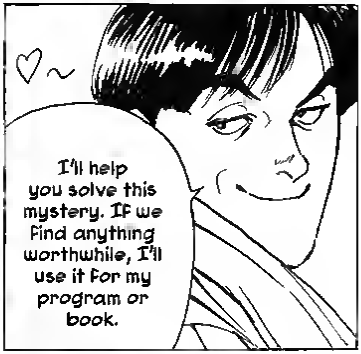

Hoki is the old name of the western part of Tottori Prefecture, famous for Daisen. And this is the only Susa that is nearby. I see...

We think that my great-grandfather wrote this in the Meiji period. My father took great care of it.




I read the letter you sent to the TV station. I didn't think you'd be such a cute boy, though...
Huh?


There's a Susa Shrine right by my house, but it's in Wakayama.
Kii, Wakayama...

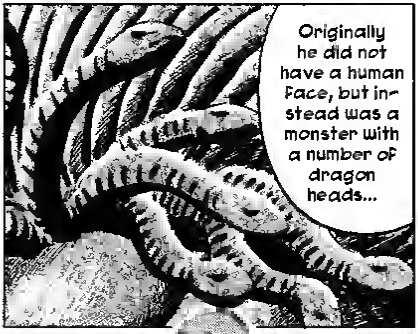

I'll help you solve this mystery. If we find anything worthwhile, I'll use it for my program or book.

そわっ

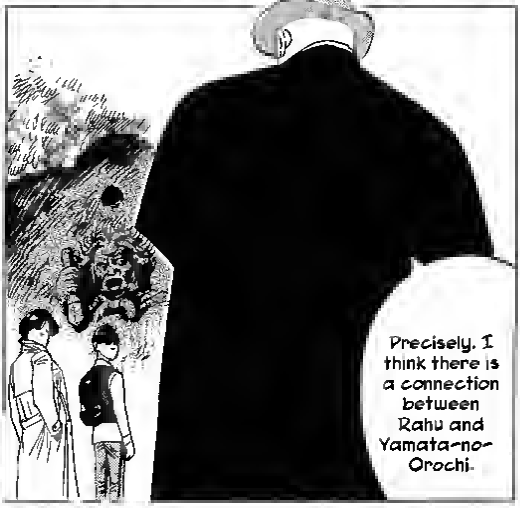
The locals worship him as Acala, but they're wrong. You see the snakes coming out of his head?

That's Rahu... Also known as Rahula, King of Asuras.

That's almost like Yamata-no-Orochi..


Originally he did not have a human face, but instead was a monster with a number of dragon heads...

M... Munakata!?


Precisely. I think there is a connection between Rahu and Yamata-no-Orochi.

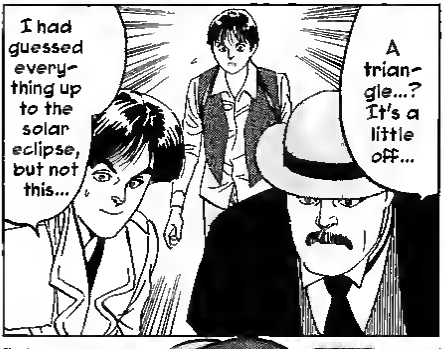
So, you've found Rahu here... This is one of the Navagraha. Just like the planets Mars and Jupiter, they called it the Planet Rahu.
Planet Rahu?
I was originally from East Inbe, near Matsue. Izumo's like my backyard.
It seems we come across each other quite often in Izumo, Imibe.
I take it he's your acquaintance? I feel somewhat bad about it, but I decided to follow you
So I take it you can figure out what the round mark on top of Rahu means right away!?

A SOLAR ECLIPSE !?
A circle painted black... Must be a solar eclipse.
T...There's something written on a piece of paper in between the pages of this book...!
They thought it occasionally swallows up the sun and the moon, causing solar and lunar eclipses.
Rahu was a dark planet they imagined to exist hidden in space!

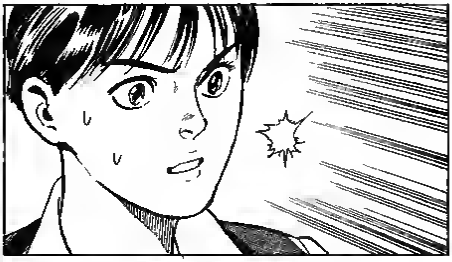
If Susanoo is the dark planet Rahu, then do you think the Ama-no-Iwato Myth is related to a solar eclipse!?
"Rahula, King of Asuras, is Susanoo-no-Mikoto...!!"
The theory that the myth of Amaterasu hiding in the cave and bringing darkness to the world refers to a solar eclipse has existed for years.
And the mythological commonality between Susanoo and Rahu has also been indicated.
Hmm... This book seems to be endorsing a manifestation theory, which superposes the Buddhist gods over top of the Japanese gods

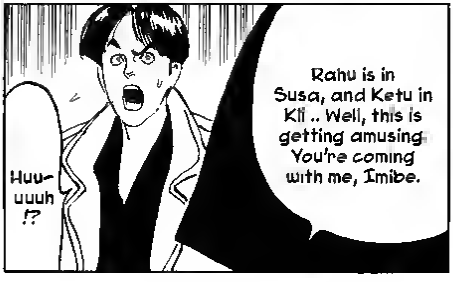
He is known as the god of storms or of the sea, but since his elder siblings are represented by celestial bodies, it would not be a stretch to assume that he refers to some sort of celestial phenomenon as well.
In the first place, Amaterasu the Sun Goddess, Tsukuyomi the Moon God, and their younger brother Susanoo were known as the Three Noble Children, but the latter does not have a definite identity.
The majority of them say that the sun and the moon are brothers (or sisters), and that the third wicked brother (or sister), named Rahu, became a star of calamity that causes solar and lunar eclipses.
Needless to say, Rahu's origins are in Hindu Buddhism, and the so-called branches of Rahu's legends remain in Southeast Asia, such as in Thailand and Cambodia...
Now you see how similar Rahu is to Susanoo.

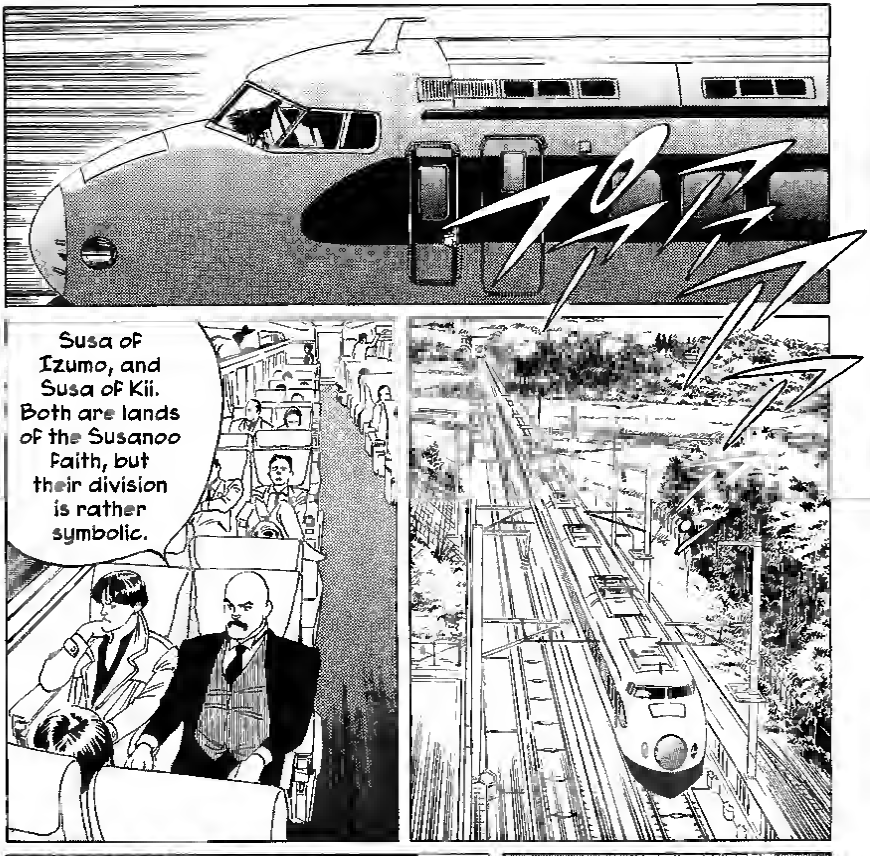
While you're at it, would you care to look at this pattern, Professor?

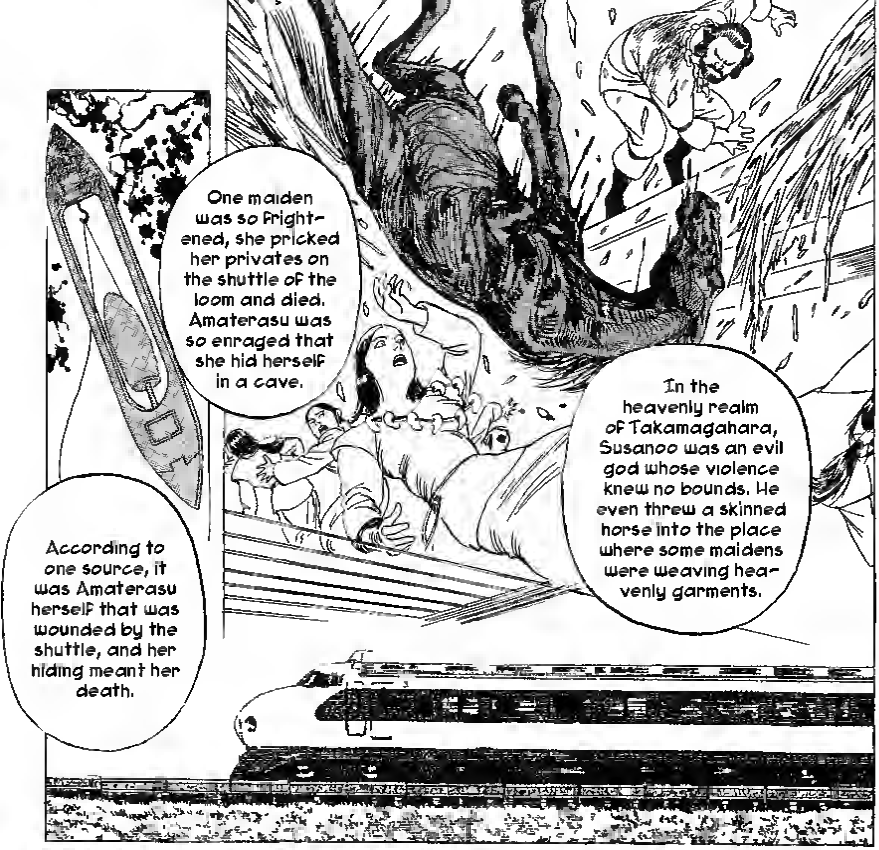

I had guessed everything up to the solar eclipse, but not this...
A triangle...? It's a little off...

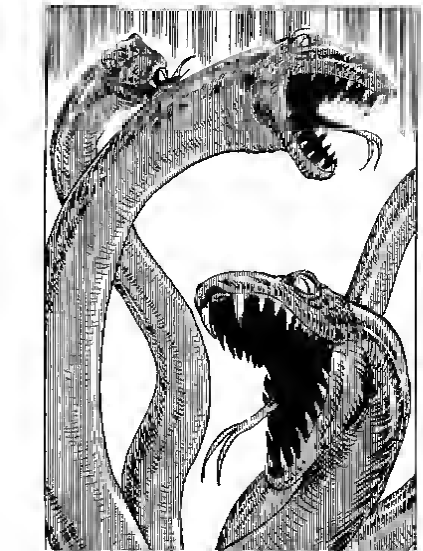
It would seem we must go to Kii.

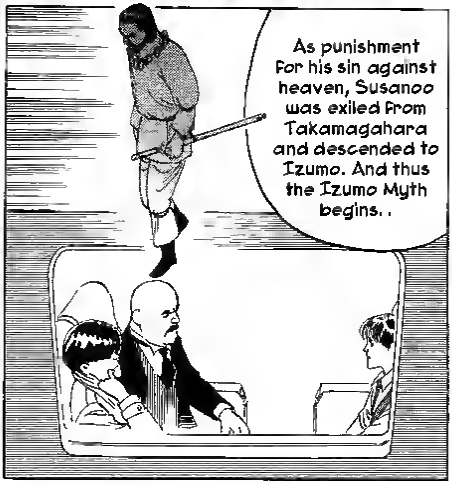



Huu-uuuh !?
Rahu is in Susa, and Ketu in Kii .. Well, this is getting amusing. You're coming with me, Imibe.


Susa of Izumo, and Susa of Kii. Both are lands of the Susanoo faith, but their division is rather symbolic.
Susanoo himself is a god of split personalities. His personality in the Takamagahara myth is the polar opposite of his personality in the Izumo myth.
It's as if he was cleaved in two...
Sniff
Come to think of it, they both have a Kumano Grand Shrine, and an underworld...

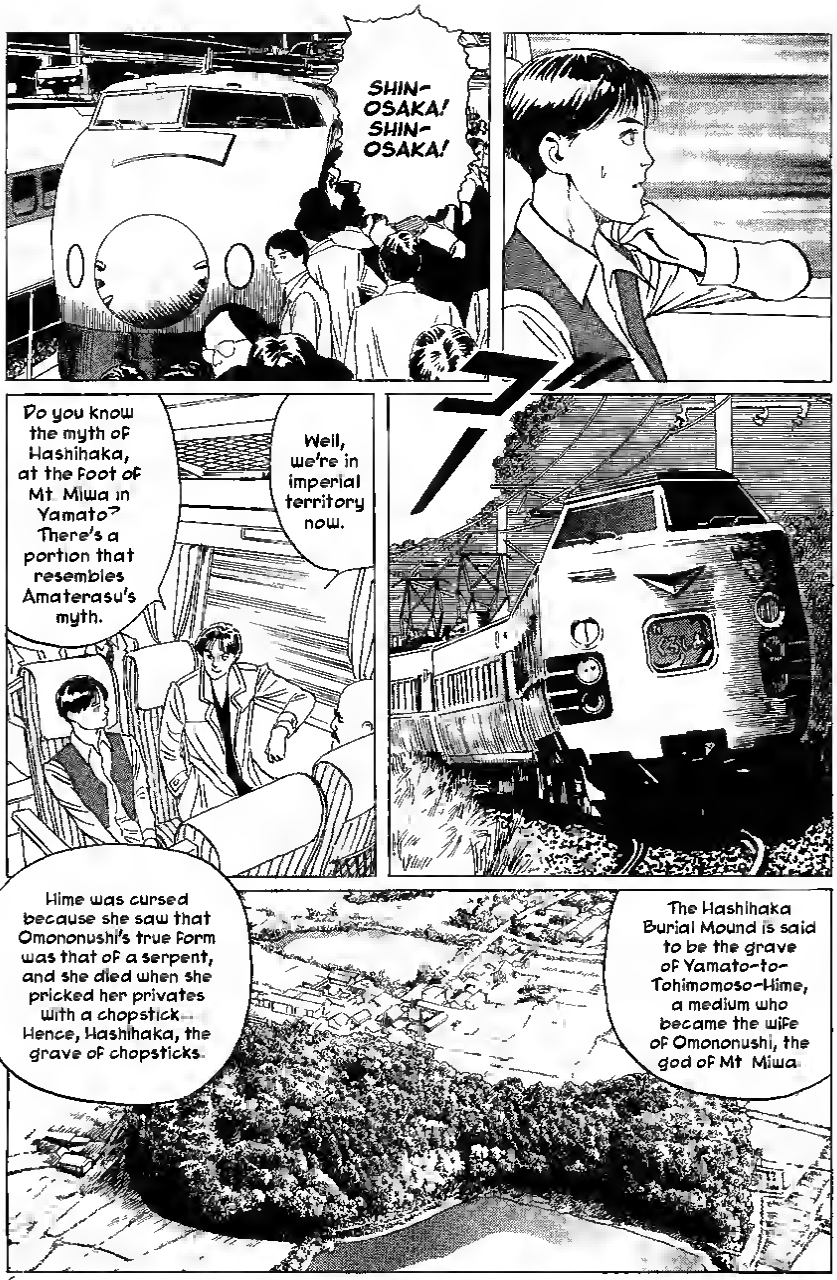

One maiden was so frightened, she pricked her privates on the shuttle of the loom and died. Amaterasu was so enraged that she hid herself in a cave.
In the heavenly realm of Takamagahara, Susanoo was an evil god whose violence knew no bounds. He even threw a skinned horse into the place where some maidens were weaving heavenly garments.
According to one source, it was Amaterasu herself that was wounded by the shuttle, and her hiding meant her death.




As punishment for his sin against heaven, Susanoo was exiled from Takamagahara and descended to Izumo. And thus the Izumo Myth begins. .

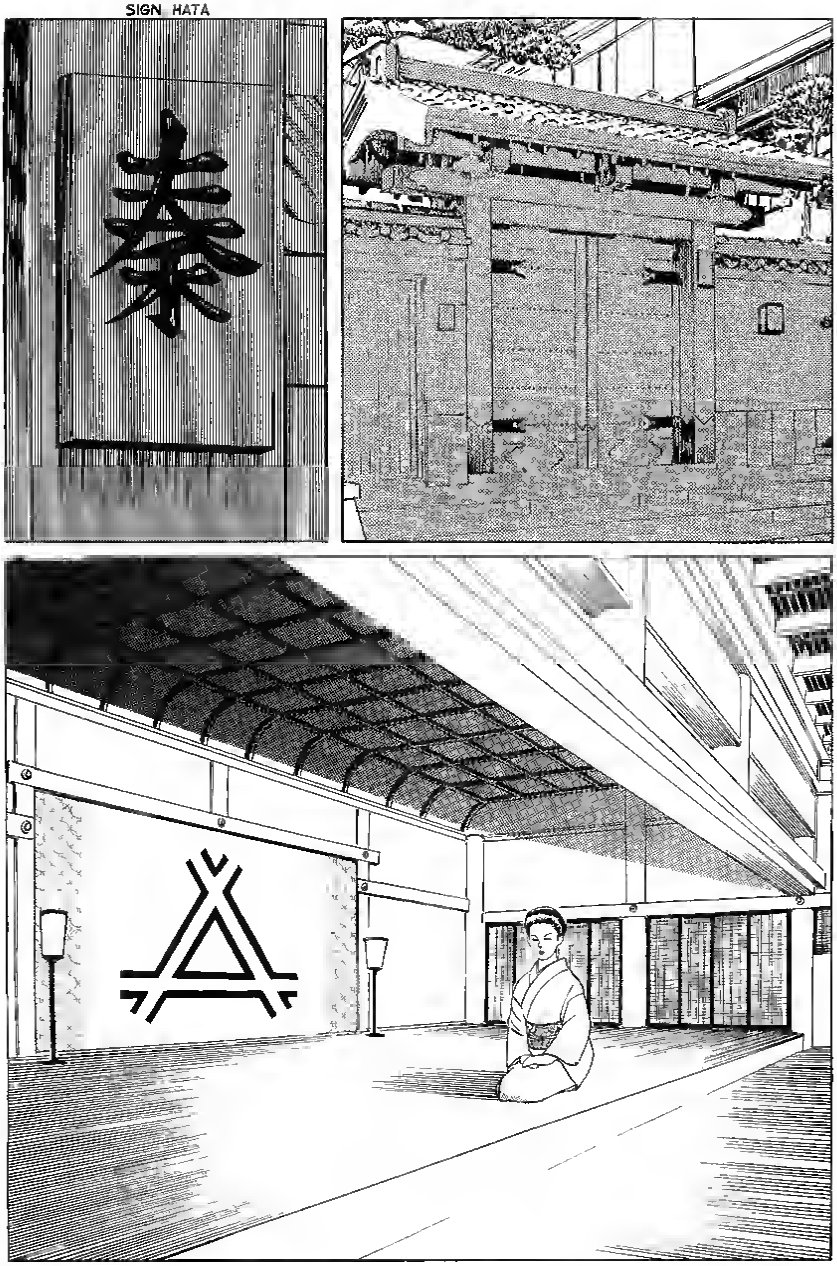
Susanoo makes a full turn and becomes a warrior of justice. He battled the Yamata-no-Orochi to save Kushinada-Hime from being sacrificed, and slew it.
He then married Hime, and lived a happy sequestered life... Is that not quite the transfiguration?

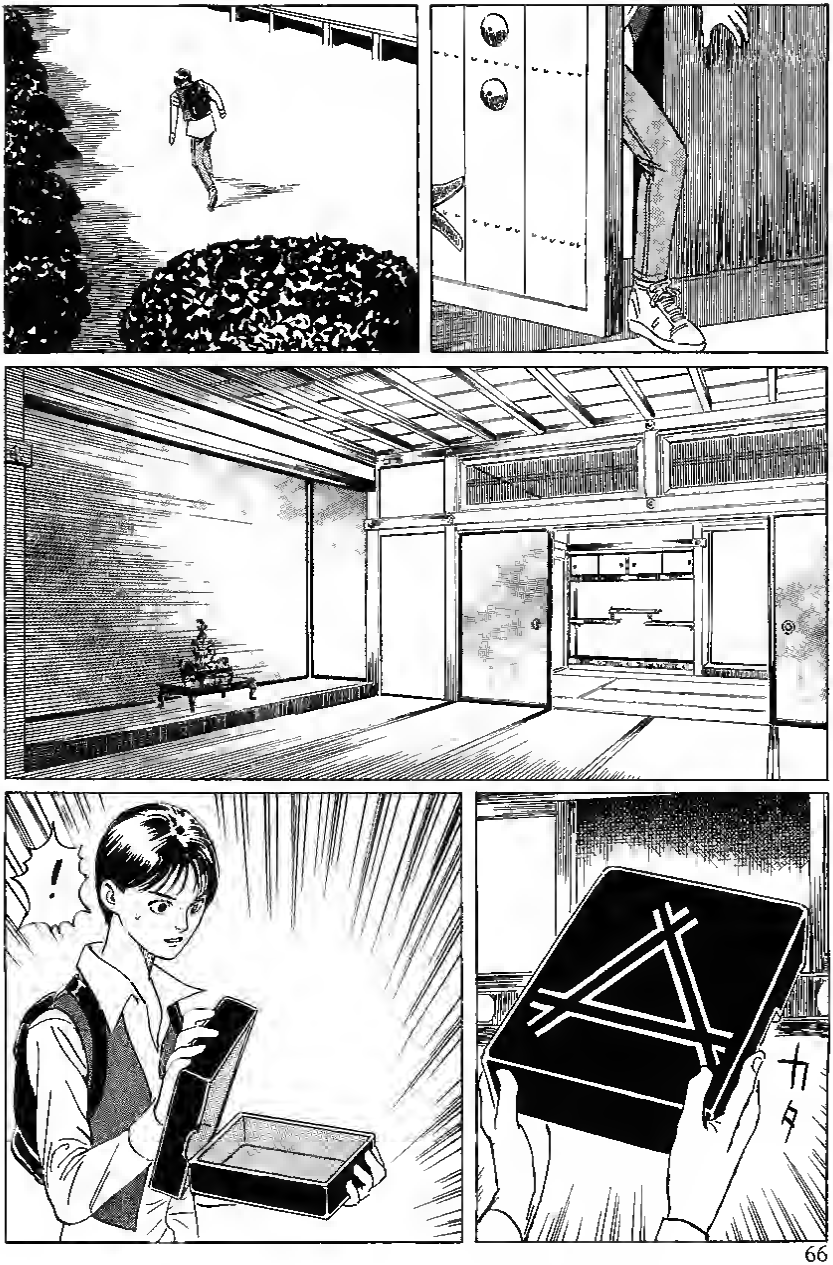
Before long, a young man named Onamuchi encountered Susanoo in the underworld. Onamuchi fell in love with Susanoo's daughter Suseri-hime, and Susanoo bestowed on him the name of Okuninushi,
meaning "Lord of the Nation"... He gave him royalty over Japan...!


SHIN-OSAKA! SHIN-OSAKA!
Do you know the myth of Hashihaka, at the foot of Mt. Miwa in Yamato? There's a portion that resembles Amaterasu's myth.
Well, we're in imperial territory now.
Hime was cursed because she saw that Omononushi's true form was that of a serpent, and she died when she pricked her privates with a chopstick... Hence, Hashihaka, the grave of chopsticks.
The Hashihaka Burial Mound is said to be the grave of Yamato-to-Tohimomoso-Hime, a medium who became the wife of Omononushi, the god of Mt. Miwa.

And Yamato-to-Tohimomoso-Hime is the medium also known as Himiko of Yamatai!
Omononushi was another name of Onamuchi, the son of Susanoo. This god seems to be surrounded by images of snakes and sharp objects...
HIMIKO !?
Some theories suggest that Himiko is Amaterasu ...!
Susa, Arida City, Wakayama Prefecture

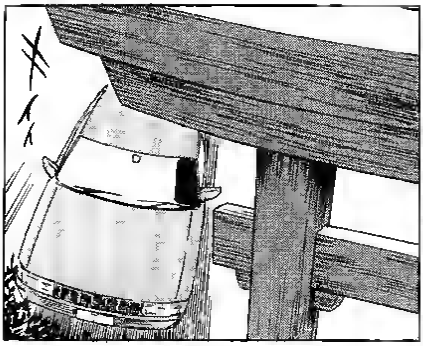
SIGN HATA



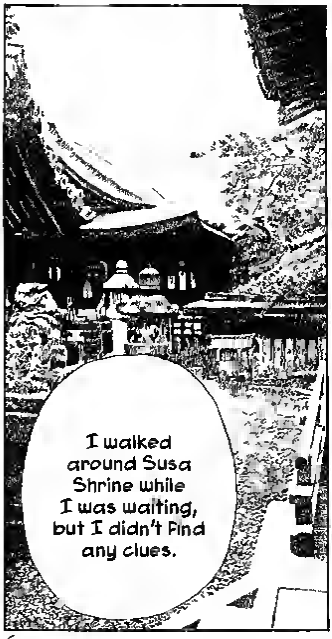

!
カタ

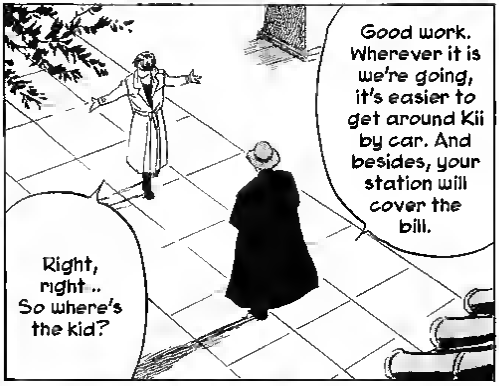
Where have you been, Takeshi? You've been truant from school!
Mother, what happened to what was inside this box...!?
Show it? To who? What have you...!?
That is not your concern right now! Tell me where you have been!
I need it! I have to show it to some people!
Now just wait, Momoyo.

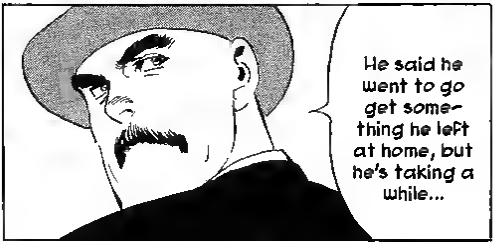
U... Uncle...!
Takeshi's all grown up now. He should at least be robust enough to skip school now and then. Hahhahha!
I know.
I came here out of concern.
Takeshi, the contents of that box are with me for safekeeping... It's a document written by your great-grandfather in the late Meiji period.
It must never be let out!
Then forget it! That document uncovers the ancient history of the Hata family. It should not be revealed to the public!



SIGN: SUSA GRAND SHRINE




Good work. Wherever it is we're going, it's easier to get around Kii by car. And besides, your station will cover the bill.
Right, right.. So where's the kid?



Well, there must be a clue somewhere. I came to Izumo in order to write a thesis on the myth of Susanoo. We may be able to find Ketu from the myth.
Sighted in Hoki... Wait, if we're following that document, then Rahu is limited to the Susa in Izumo, but not Ketu! Ketu could be anywhere in Kii...
They're still the wealthiest family in the prefecture, but they used to even own the large mountainous lands between here to Kumano! Can you believe it?
Oh ..?
So listen. I was talking to the people at the car rental place, and they said that kid is part of the Hata family, and they're a really prestigious family around here!
There are a lot of celebrities and politicians among them. In fact, remember the retired Prime Minister Hata Seikichi? He was from this family, too! That's why I was so surprised!

The Hata Family... They must be related to the settlers of the Hata Clan...
Here, have an Arida tangerine. A nearby farmer shared them with me, and they're quite good.
Huh? Oh...
One theory says that they have the blood of Emperor Qin Shi Huang...
They were the oldest and most powerful immigrants from the continent in Ancient Japan.
If I was shooting this for TV, I would say... "If Himiko was Amaterasu, then who was Susanoo? And what was the myth of Ama-no-Iwato!?"
One thing I forgot to mention about Hashibaka Burial Mound is that there's a theory that Queen Himiko of Yamatai was the master of the mound.
T...That's just it! See how the romance spreads?

"Himiko was said to have died in 248 CE, and it has been astronomically confirmed that this was the year when a total solar eclipse was visible from Japan! The world was darkened, as if Amaterasu had died!"
"Then something happened amidst the chaos... Something with men like Susanoo or Rahu behind the scenes... Something that changed the face of Ancient Japan..."
But of course, all of this came from that boy asking the TV station to help find his father...
He went missing nine years ago, while chasing some kind of ancient mystery...
Find his father?
...And that'd be the gist of it...

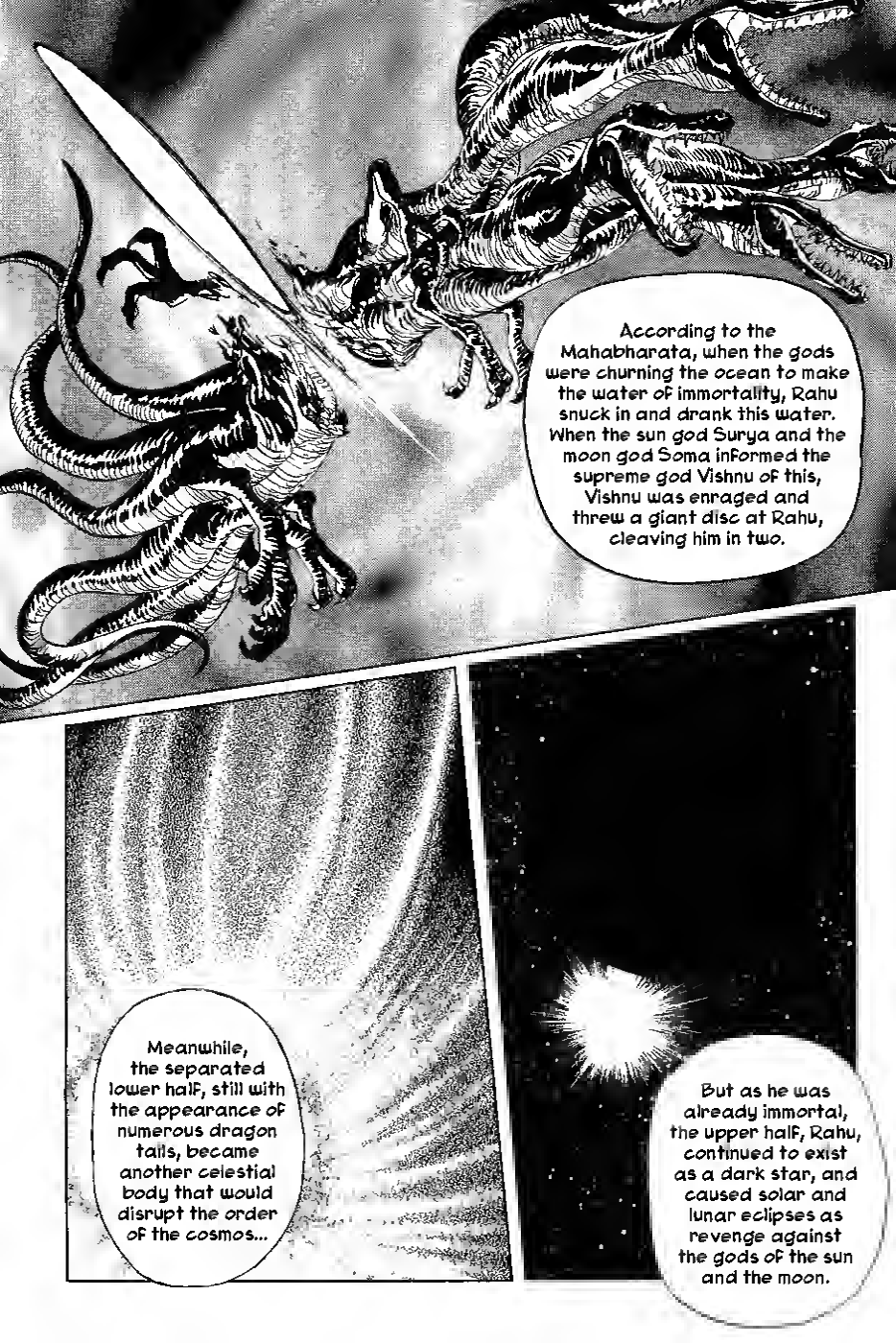
I KNOW MY FATHER HAD READ THAT BOOK!!
I WANT TO KNOW WHERE MY FATHER WENT!
Takeshi, you said you wanted to show someone, didn't you? Tell me who it was! Let me, Hata Seikichi, talk to them!
That man walked out of this household! I forbid you from calling him "Father"!
NO!
TA-KESHI! ...AH!
NO!!

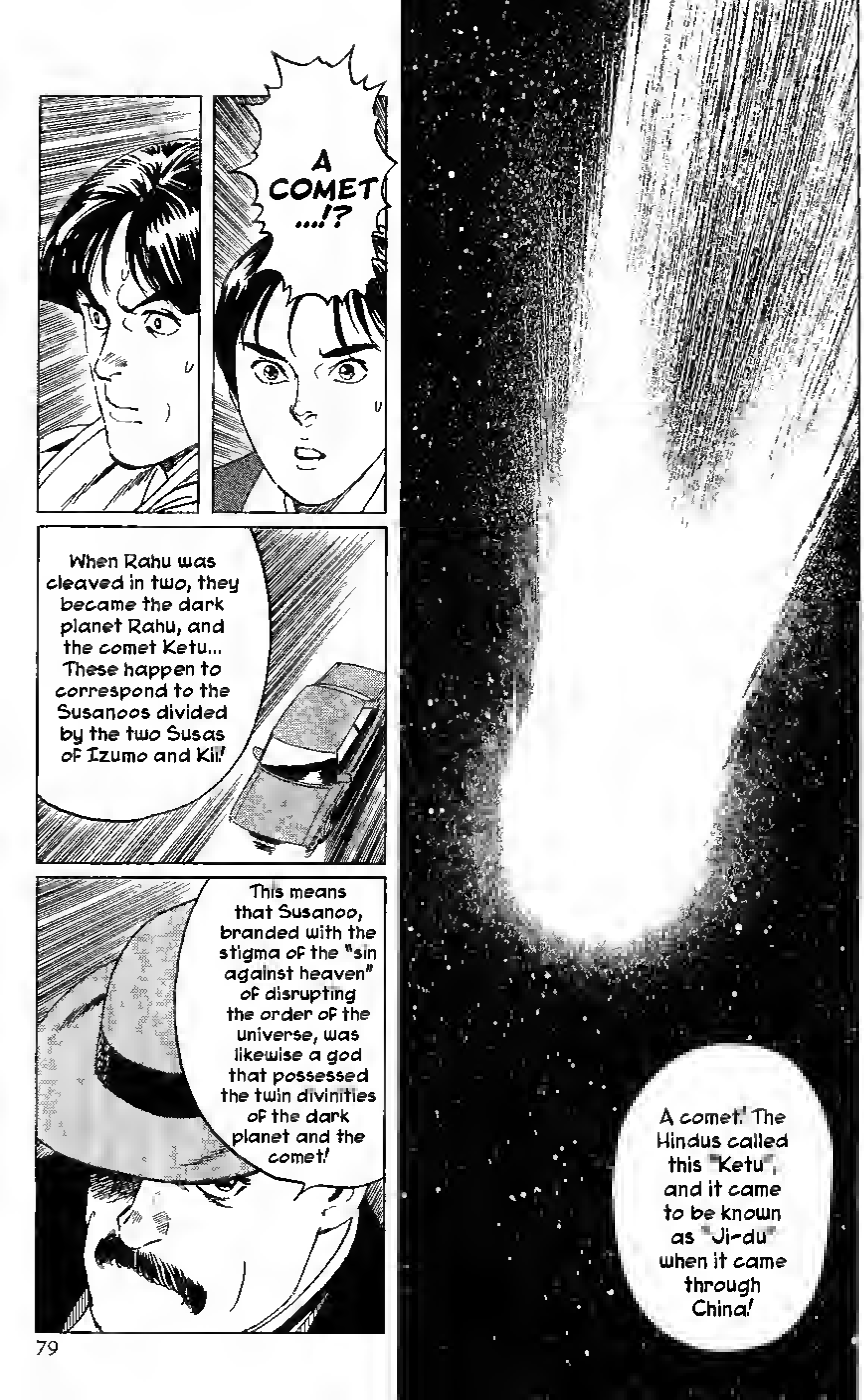
SOME-
BODY
START
THE
CAR!
AFTER
HIM!
.....

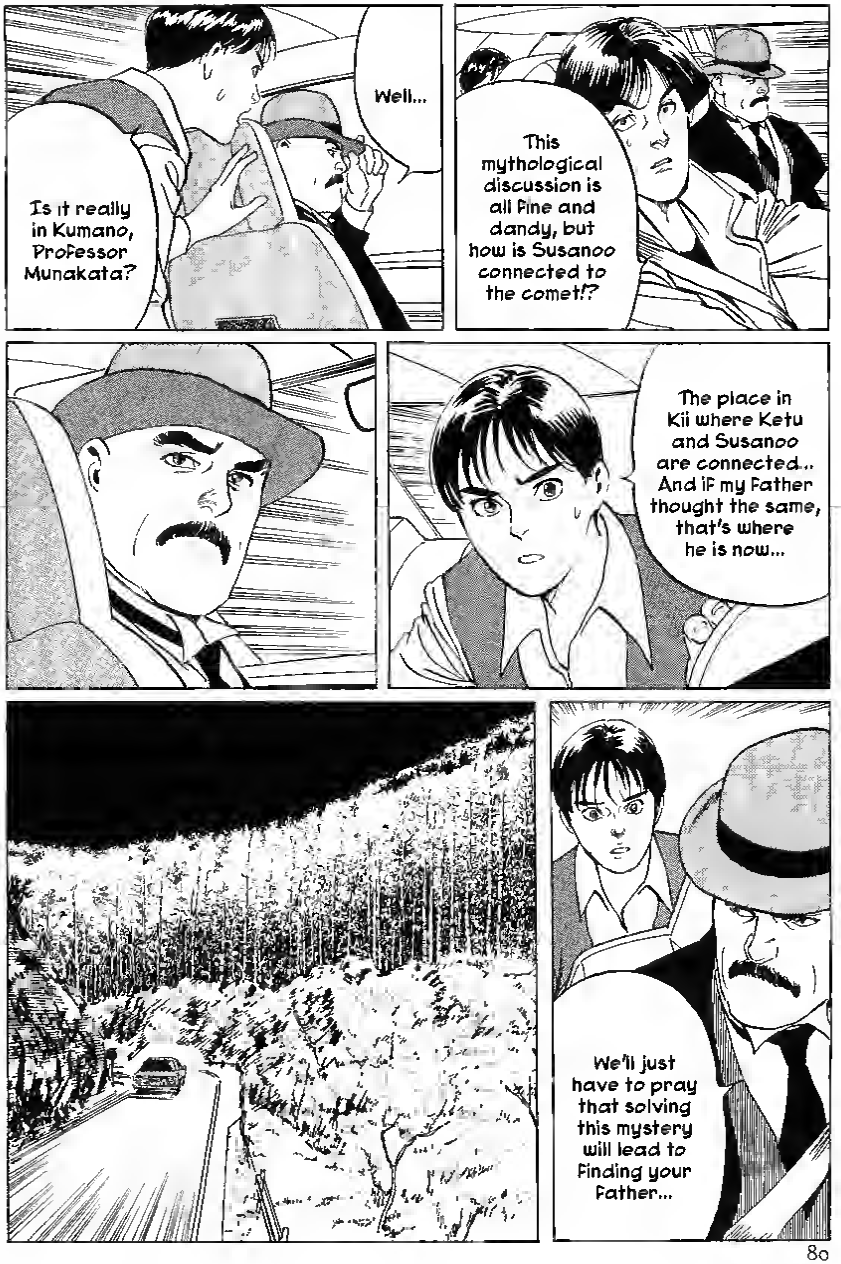
And you've never seen the document inside here...?
The Three Gates ...?
T...That's the crest of the Hata Family, called the "Three Gates". I remembered it when I saw the triangle under Rahu.
I remember that it explains the meaning of the crest at the very beginning...
I looked at it once when I was really little, but most of it was too hard for me to read. But...

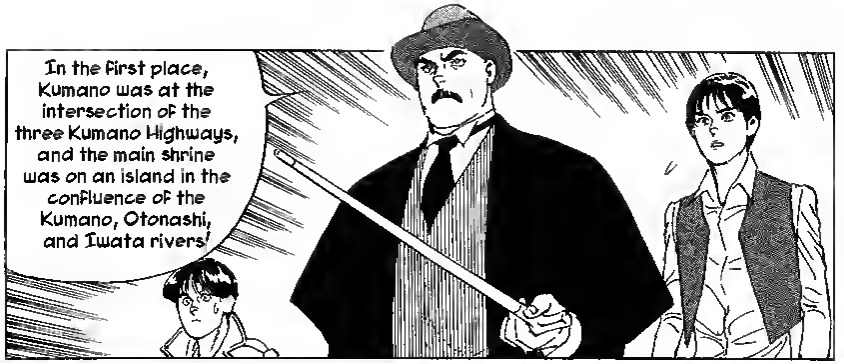
These are the Three Rivers, the Three Paths, the Three Gates...
The First leads to death, the second leads to Yomi, and the third leads to immortality...
Yomi? Immortality ...?
Hmm...?
The Three Rivers, the Three Paths...
Wait. I've heard that before...

Drive to Tanabe, then turn onto Highway 311? Where exactly are we going!?
This is what they used to call "Nakahechi".. The Kumano Highway. It will obviously lead us to Kumano.
KUMANO... IS THAT WHERE KETU IS!?
I told you that Rahu originated in Hindu mythology.
The Atharva-Veda says that Rahu once looked much like the Yamata-no-Orochi, with dragon heads and dragon tails...

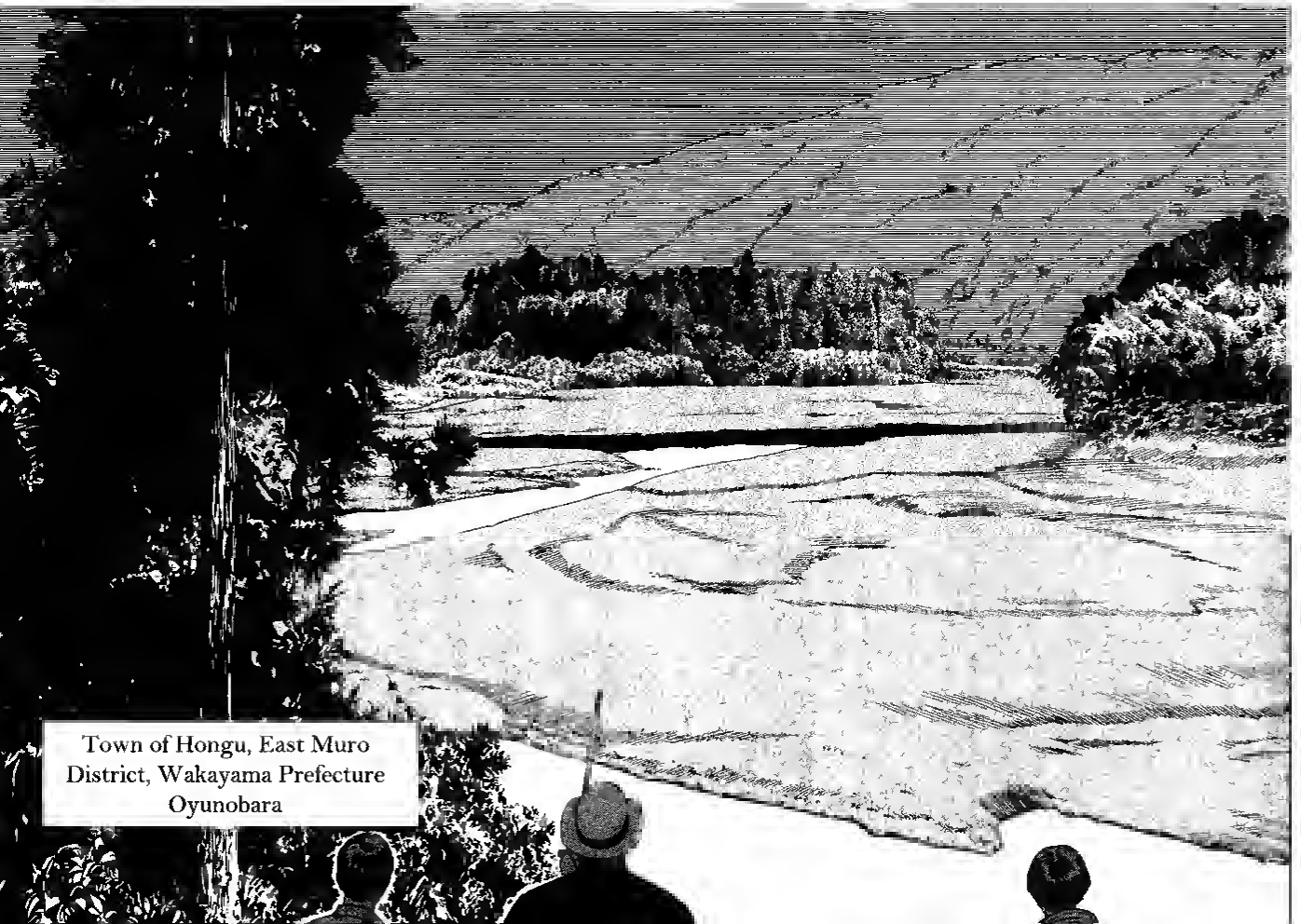

According to the Mahabharata, when the gods were churning the ocean to make the water of immortality, Rahu snuck in and drank this water. When the sun god Surya and the moon god Soma informed the supreme god Vishnu of this, Vishnu was enraged and threw a giant disc at Rahu, cleaving him in two.
Meanwhile, the separated lower half, still with the appearance of numerous dragon tails, became another celestial body that would disrupt the order of the cosmos...
But as he was already immortal, the upper half, Rahu, continued to exist as a dark star, and caused solar and lunar eclipses as revenge against the gods of the sun and the moon.


A COMET ...!?
When Rahu was cleaved in two, they became the dark planet Rahu, and the comet Ketu... These happen to correspond to the Susanoos divided by the two Susas of Izumo and Kii!
This means that Susanoo, branded with the stigma of the "sin against heaven" of disrupting the order of the universe, was likewise a god that possessed the twin divinities of the dark planet and the comet!
A comet! The Hindus called this "Ketu", and it came to be known as "Ji-du" when it came through China!

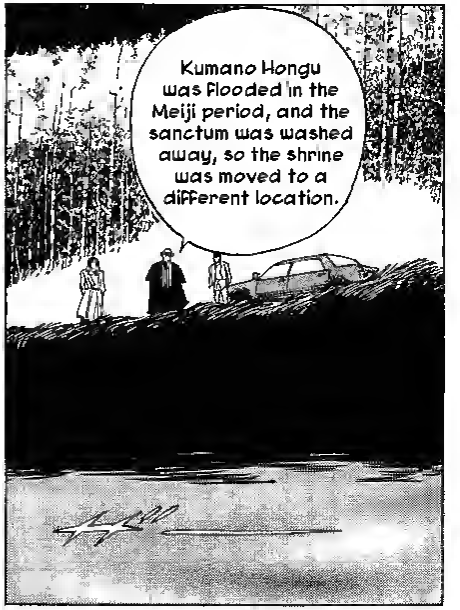

Is it really in Kumano, Professor Munakata?
Well...
This mythological discussion is all fine and dandy, but how is Susanoo connected to the comet!?
The place in Kii where Ketu and Susanoo are connected... And if my father thought the same, that's where he is now...
We'll just have to pray that solving this mystery will lead to finding your father...


In the first place, Kumano was at the intersection of the three Kumano Highways, and the main shrine was on an island in the confluence of the Kumano, Otonashi, and Iwata rivers!

HUH!?
Aren't we going to Kumano Hongu Grand Shrine...?
Imibe, wait! Not that way!


Town of Hongu, East Muro District, Wakayama Prefecture
Oyunobara

The original shrine...?
We are, yes, but not current location. We're going to the original shrine.

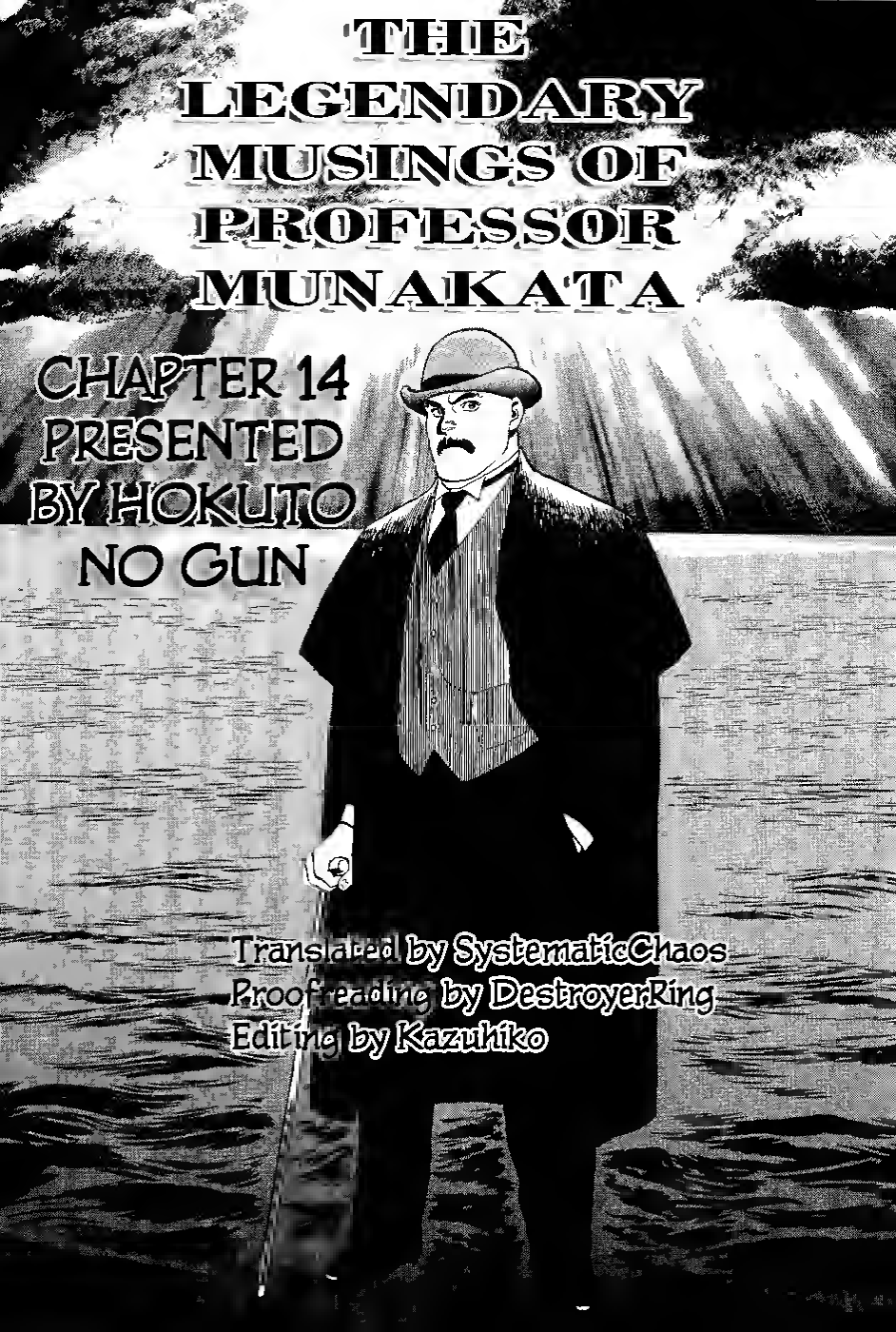

Kumano Hongu was flooded in the Meiji period, and the sanctum was washed away, so the shrine was moved to a different location.

This must be where Ketu is hidden.
Precisely. This is the only place in Kii enclosed by these.
KETU!? ...AH!
The Three Rivers, and the Three Paths...!
Kumano Hongu Grand Shrine... The main deity enshrined here is called the Great God Ketsu-miko... And that's another name for Susanoo!

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 14

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



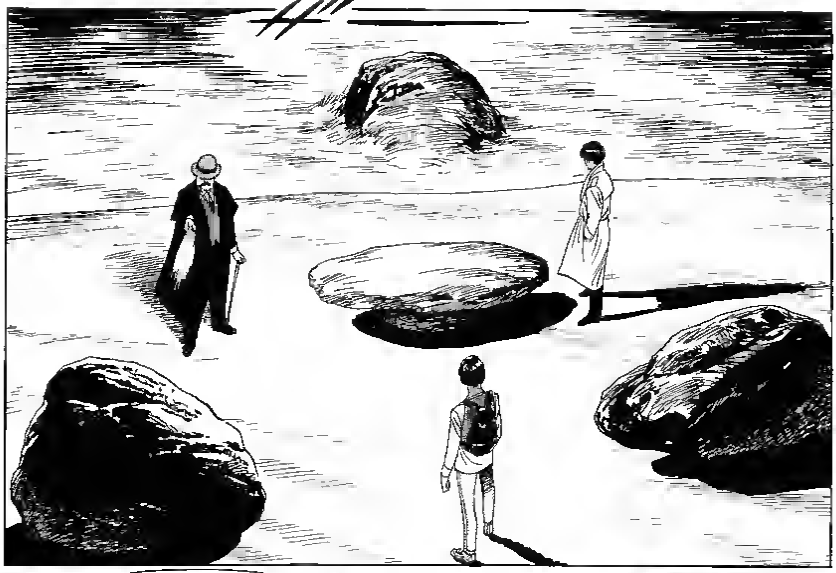
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

Bite 13: The Comet King's Key

There's nothing on this massive sandbank but a forest and a monument to the old shrine! Where's Ketu?
Hmm... Normally, the Hata Clan refers to the clan that prospered in the province of Yamashiro, and their name remains in Uzumasa, Kyoto. Their settlement from the Korean peninsula is recorded as taking place after the founding of the Yamato court.
But there may have been a Hata Clan that settled in Kii earlier, through a different route...
We really ought to come back in the morning, but let's keep looking for now.
Susanoo, Ketu, and the Great God Ketsumiko... They're all enshrined at Kumano Hongu, right where my family crest says! What does all this have to do with the Hata family...?
They don't appear at all in the history of the Hata Clan, but I'm sure that document was based on some kind of family tradition, that will tell us about circumstances surrounding them.

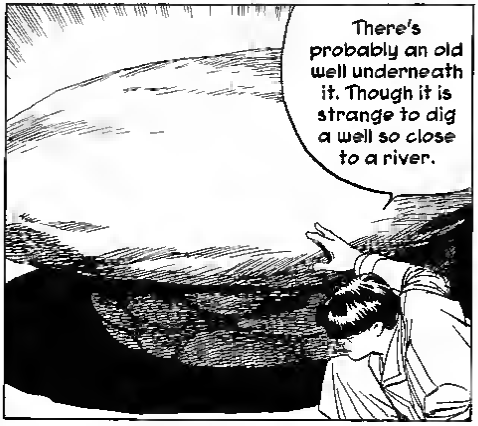
But why the Comet King...?
The Nihon Shoki does say that Susanoo descended on Silla after his exile from Takamagahara, and there is a theory that he's a god of settlers connected to the Hata Clan.
Whether through your father or your grandfather, there seems to be a secret that draws the Hata Family and Susanoo together...
I think that Ame-no-Hiboko was a comet god!
He is recorded as the prince of Silla, who settled in Japan during the reigns of Suinin and Ojin, but he was likely worshipped as a god in the Hata Clan's sphere of influence.
There is a very similar god called "Ame-no-Hiboko"!
Ame-no-Hiboko... The Lance that Burns in the Heavens!

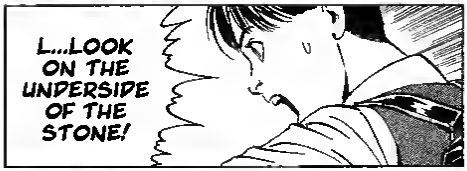
This is what I think... that in ancient times, people who believed in the comet settled here from the continent.
This god's name was originally Susanoo, but became Ame-no-Hiboko when combined with the Japanese language, and also imaged as Rahu and Ketu after the arrival of Buddhism... They are all referring to the comet!

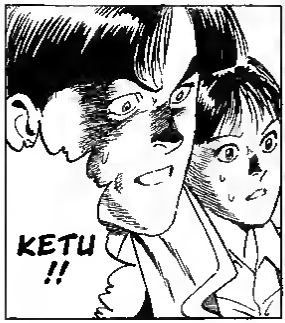


UNNNNGGHHH!

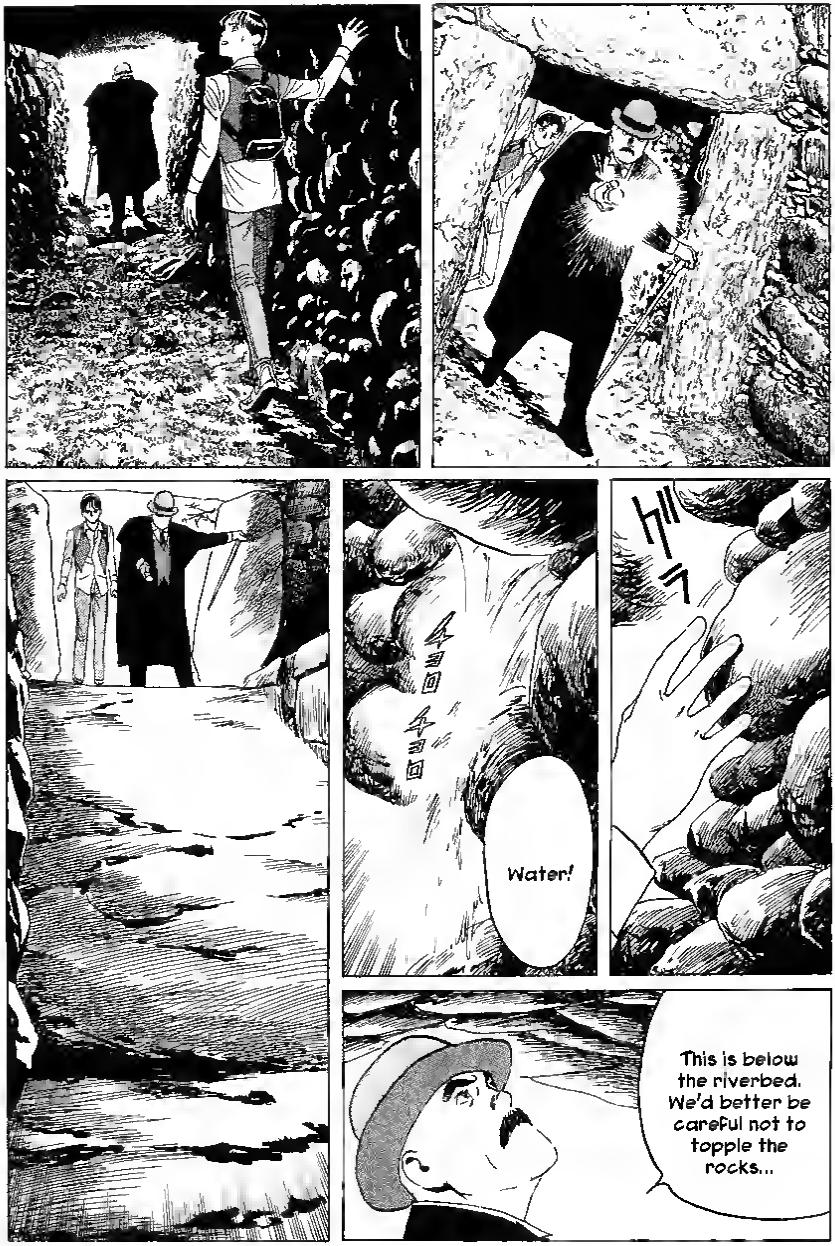
There are three stones forming a triangle around a center stone...

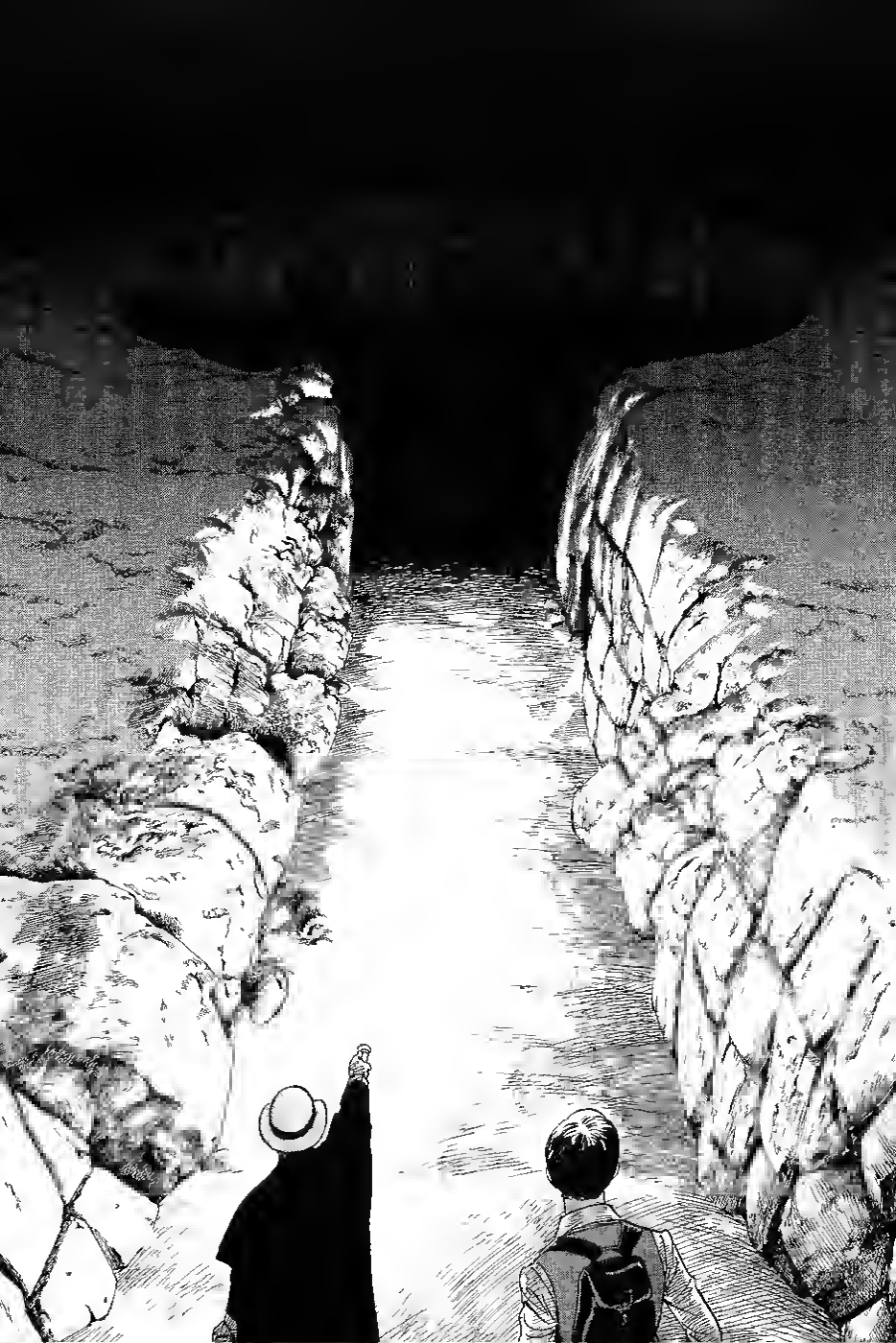

There's probably an old well underneath it. Though it is strange to dig a well so close to a river.


L...LOOK ON THE UNDERSIDE OF THE STONE!

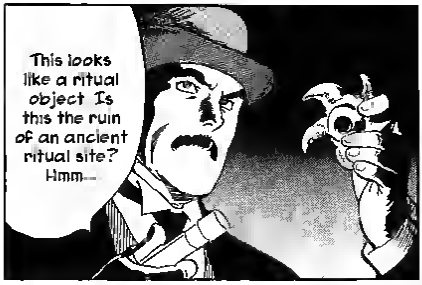

KETU !!

I smell earth... It's an old well, just as I thought. There may be a cave at the bottom.
I hate holes, so I'll stay out here! You remember what happened to my assistant that lit his lighter in a tunnel in Izumo?
I've had an experience like that before. That's why I always keep this on me.
Just don't put the stone lid back on the well.


ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴ
Water!
This is below the riverbed. We'd better be careful not to topple the rocks...



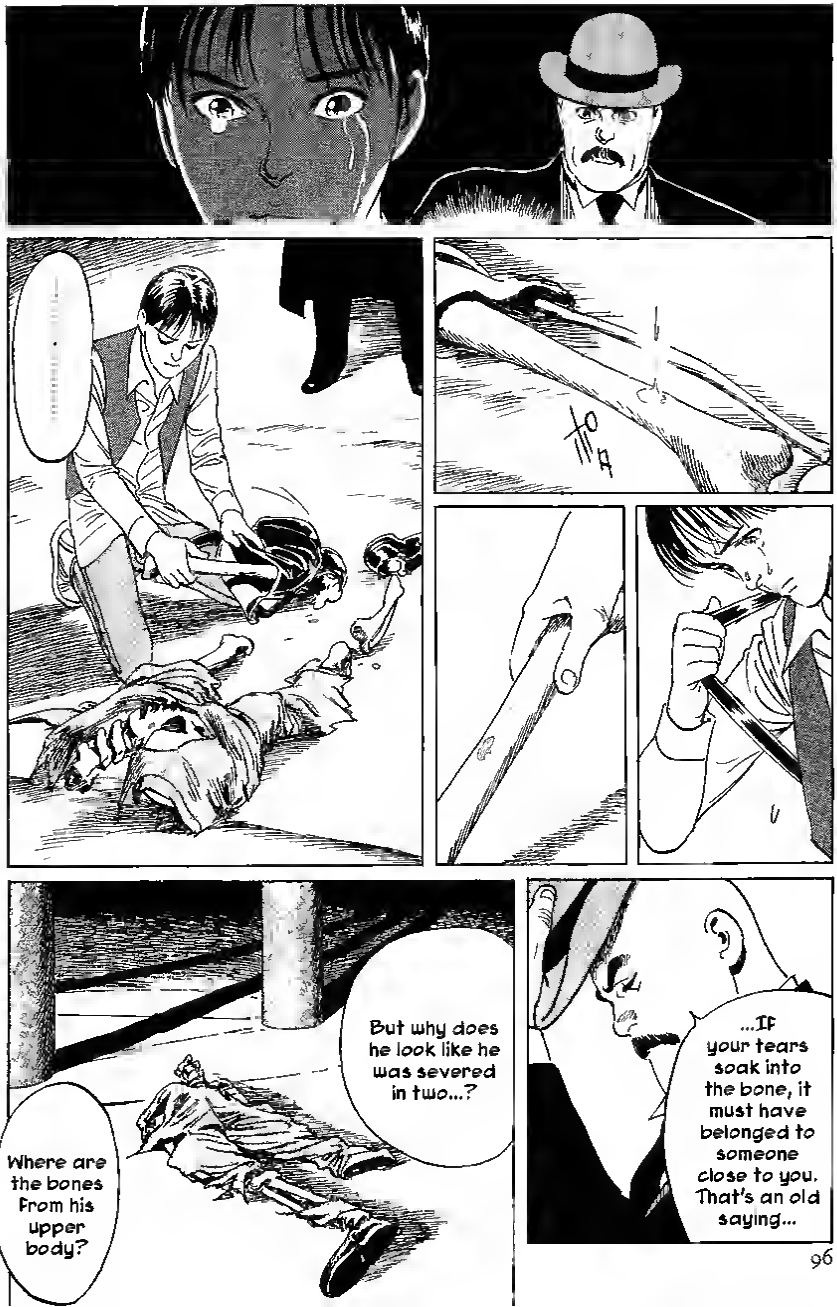
I...Is this a burial mound?
No... It looks like the shamisen-shaped chambers used as tombs by the settler clans, but they practically dug it right under a keyhole-shaped burial mound...

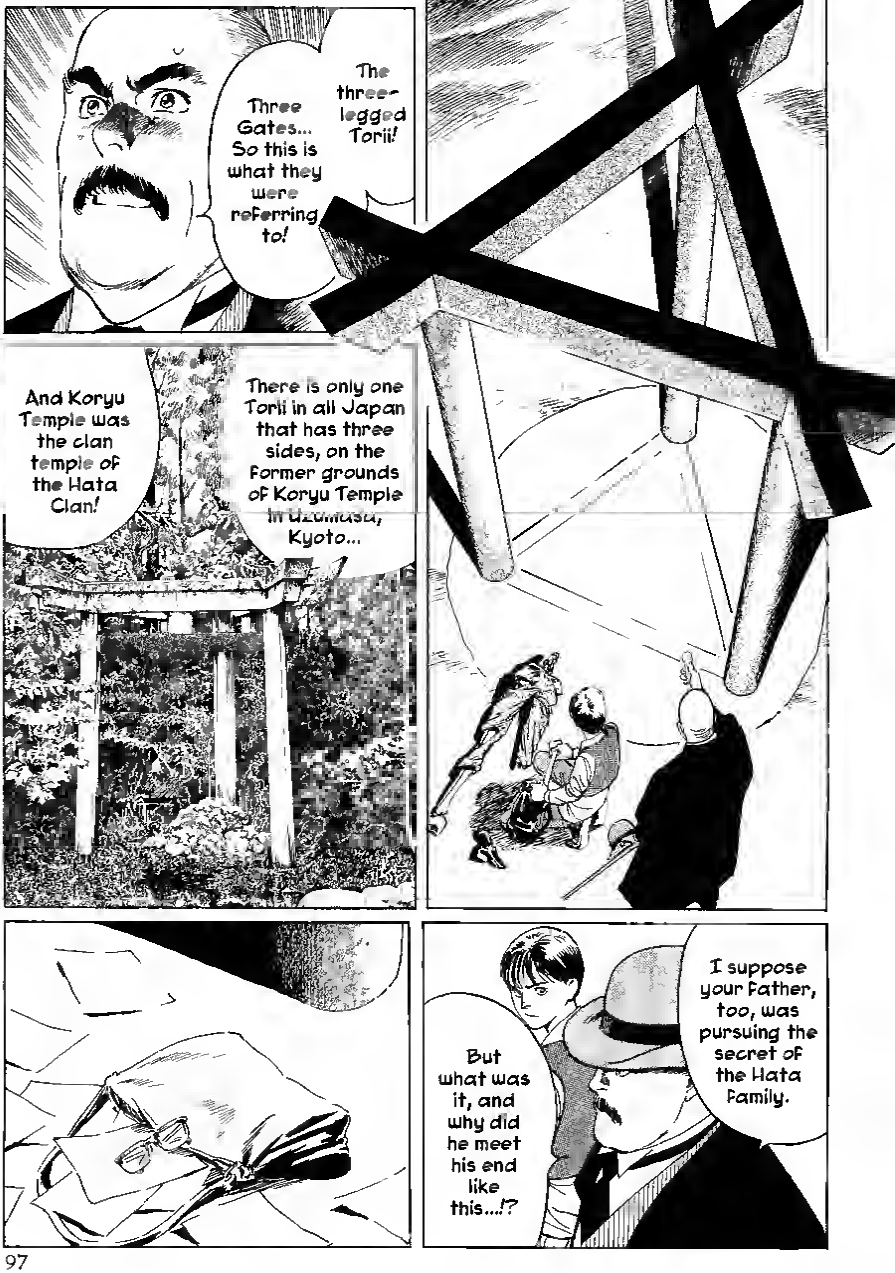

This looks like a ritual object. Is this the ruin of an ancient ritual site? Hmm...

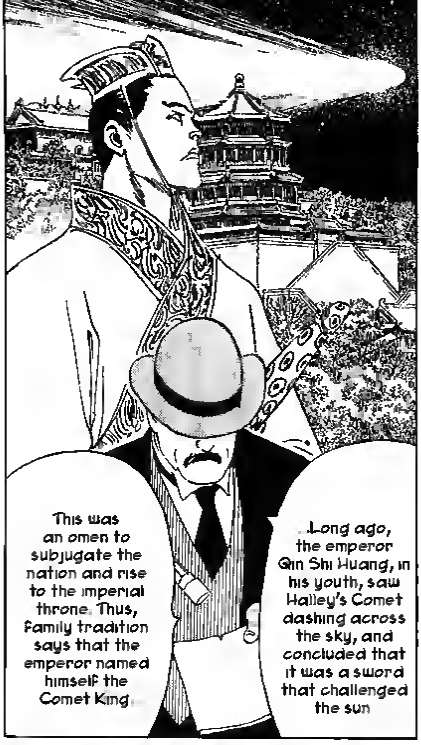
A Himorogi is a primitive shrine.
So, Kumano Himorogi is underneath Kumano Hongu...

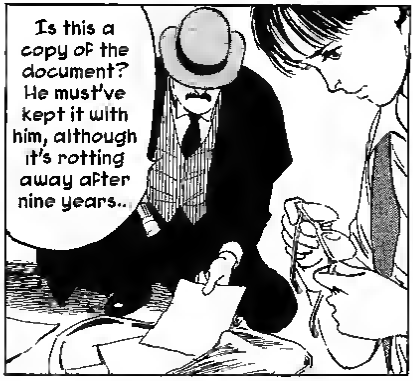
Ame-no-Hiboko was said to have brought the "Kumano Himorogi" from Silla.
Kumano Himo-rogi?

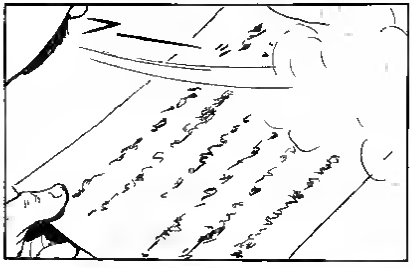
Ah.. Hey! Takeshi!


Where are the bones from his upper body?
But why does he look like he was severed in two...?
...If your tears soak into the bone, it must have belonged to someone close to you. That's an old saying...

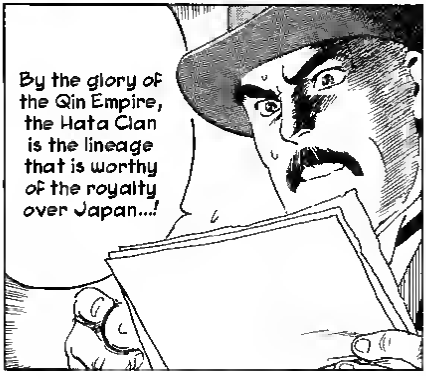

The three-legged Torii!
Three Gates... So this is what they were referring to!
There is only one Torii in all Japan that has three sides, on the former grounds of Koryu Temple in Uzumasa, Kyoto...
And Koryu Temple was the clan temple of the Hata Clan!
I suppose your father, too, was pursuing the secret of the Hata family.
But what was it, and why did he meet his end like this...!?

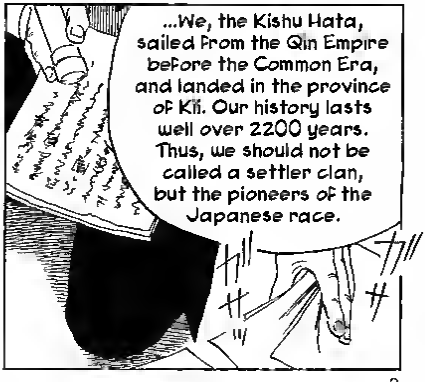

This was an omen to subjugate the nation and rise to the imperial throne. Thus, family tradition says that the emperor named himself the Comet King.
...Long ago, the emperor Qin Shi Huang, in his youth, saw Halley's Comet dashing across the sky, and concluded that it was a sword that challenged the sun


Is this a copy of the document? He must've kept it with him, although it's rotting away after nine years..



Comet King!?


By the glory of the Qin Empire, the Hata Clan is the lineage that is worthy of the royalty over Japan...!


...We, the Kishu Hata, sailed from the Qin Empire before the Common Era, and landed in the province of Kii. Our history lasts well over 2200 years. Thus, we should not be called a settler clan, but the pioneers of the Japanese race.

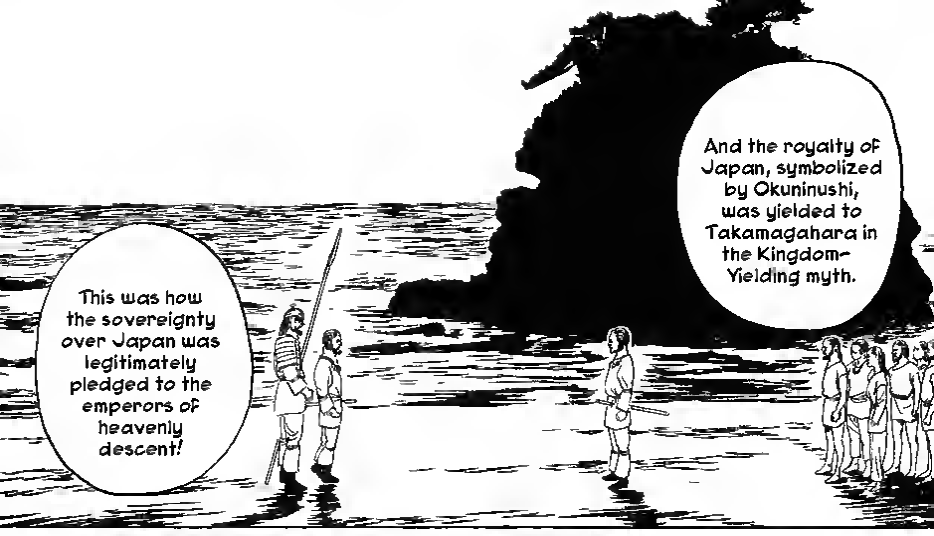
According to the History of Wei, Queen Himiko of Yamatai ruled the nation for years through sorcery... Thus for many years, ancient Japan was in the age of a matriarchy, passed down from medium to medium.
The ancient Hata clan happened to see the comet dashing across the sky, and judged it to be Ame-no-Hibiko, the lance that besieges the sun goddess.
So they decided it was the time to usurp the throne of Japan, just as Qin Shi Huang did before them!

And so the matriarchy was abolished, and the age of patriarchy began.
This was the birth of the new sun god, the King of Hata.
IF... IF THIS IS TRUE, THEN THE FOUNDER OF THE IMPERIAL SYSTEM... AND THE MYTH OF SUSANOO IS...
So now you know just how great the Hata Clan's lineage is...

MOTHER ...!?
Hohoho! Good thing I hid above ground! I wouldn't want to cross those scary people!
This was where Father was all along...
In your Face, Munakata!
But regardless, I guess the Hata Family was connected to Himiko's death and the solar eclipse after all!

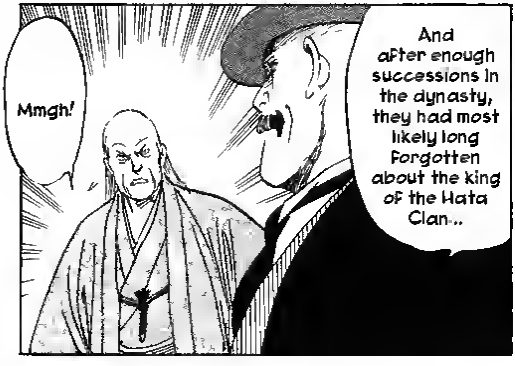
I thought he abandoned us and disappeared somewhere...
Do you know who I am? I am former Prime Minister Hata Seikichi!
You seem to be some sort of scholar, but how dare you deceive Takeshi and stick your head where it doesn't belong!
Susanoo killed Amaterasu, just as the Hata Clan killed Himiko and usurped the throne!
This incident was mythologized when the Yamato Court was formed and the myths of Japan were compiled.
They didn't want a civil war happening at every appearance of the comet, so they needed to change Susanoo into a powerless god...
But the revolutionary god Susanoo was a dangerous god to the Court, who were consolidating their government!

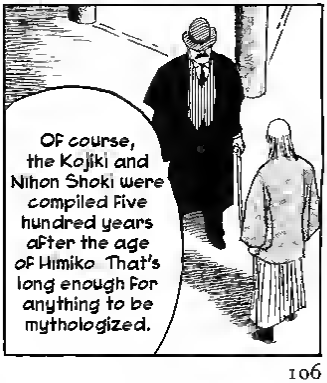
They must have incorporated the Buddhist myth of Rahu and Ketu here. By tearing himself in two, the raging god of ambition brought self-destruction upon himself!
Susanoo's defeat of the Yamata-no-Orochi was an act akin to severing himself, for the dark planet and the comet were the true nature of Susanoo himself.
His last remaining role was to give Onamuchi the title of "Okuninushi" in the land of Yomi in Izumo...


This was how the sovereignty over Japan was legitimately pledged to the emperors of heavenly descent!
And the royalty of Japan, symbolized by Okuninushi, was yielded to Takamagahara in the Kingdom-Yielding myth.

It is all a myth to legitimize the bloody conversion from the matriarchy to patriarchy!

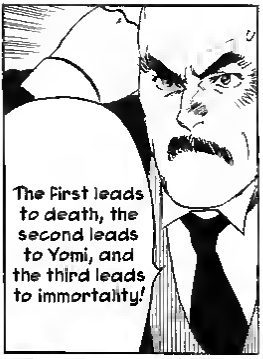
T...That's a clear and powerful hypothesis as ever... I'm impressed, but jealous at the same time.


Mmgh!
And after enough successions in the dynasty, they had most likely long forgotten about the king of the Hata Clan...

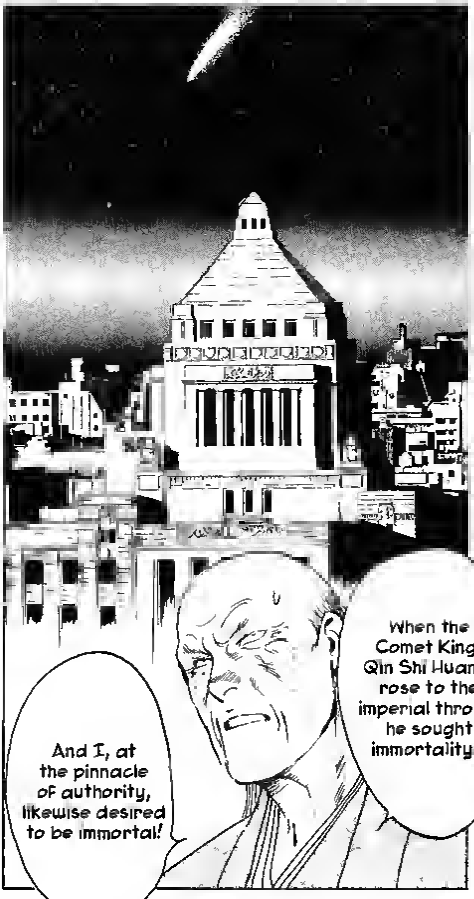

Of course, the Kojiki and Nihon Shoki were compiled five hundred years after the age of Himiko. That's long enough for anything to be mythologized.

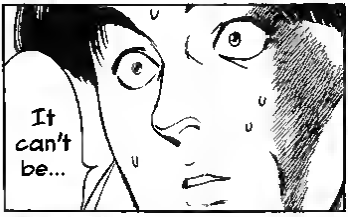
After two thousand years, lineage means nothing!
SILENCE! THE HATA ARE THE RULERS OF JAPAN! THAT HAS NOT CHANGED AFTER TWO THOUSAND YEARS!
DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

Now you listen to me! Nine years ago, when Halley's Comet appeared, I was Prime Minister! The Hata were the rulers!
You stay silent! This professor is a viper!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO PROFESSOR MUNAKATA?
It was then that I instigated Takeshi's father to find Kumano Himorogi...
W...What did you just say...!?
He was such a docile man for a nephew-in-law marrying into our family, so I told him to at least put his researching skills to work for the good of the Hata family.
So I told him to find the Gate of Immortality!
WHY!?

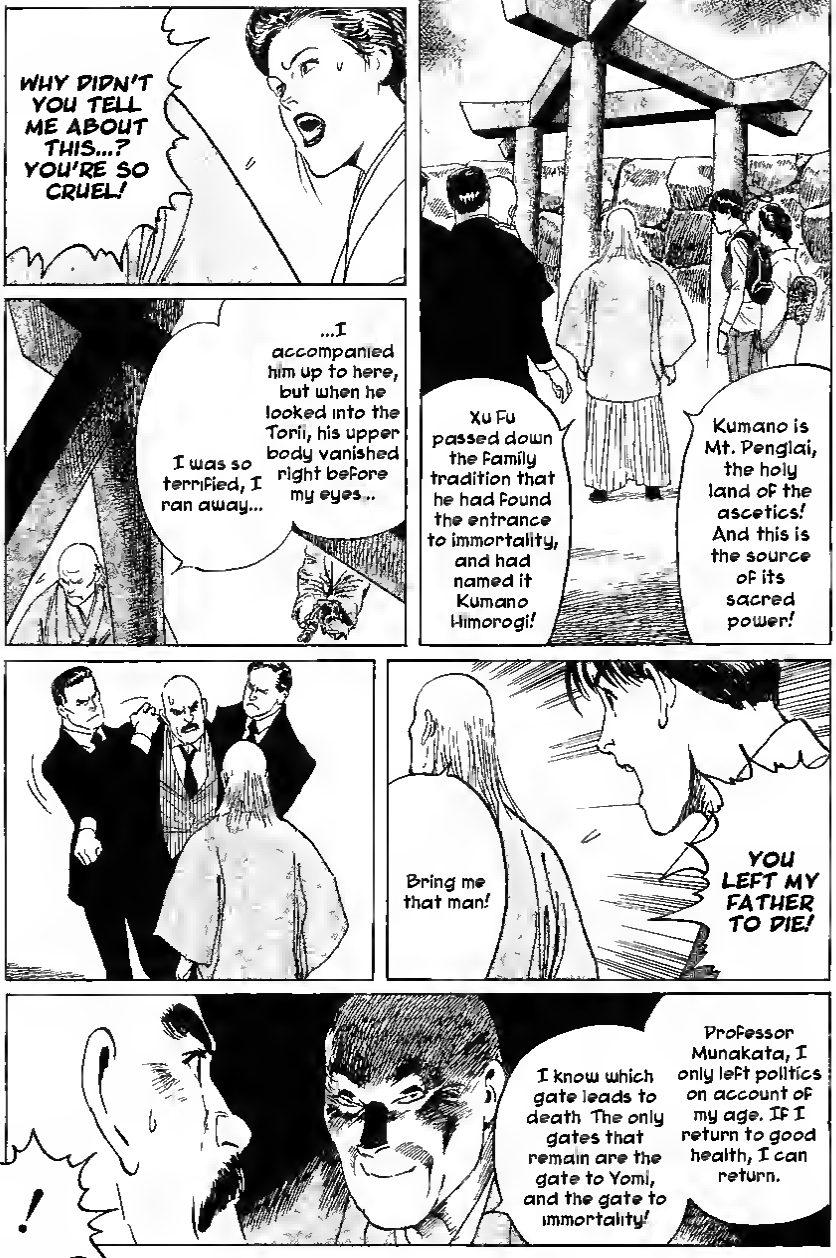

The first leads to death, the second leads to Yomi, and the third leads to immortality!

Kumano... Huh?
Qin Shi Huang...?
Im-mortal?

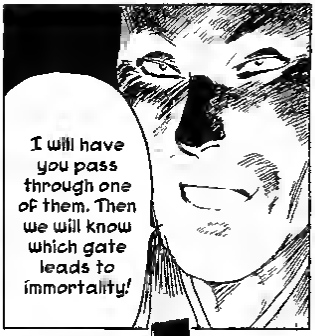

When the Comet King, Qin Shi Huang, rose to the imperial throne, he sought immortality...
And I, at the pinnacle of authority, likewise desired to be immortal!


It can't be...

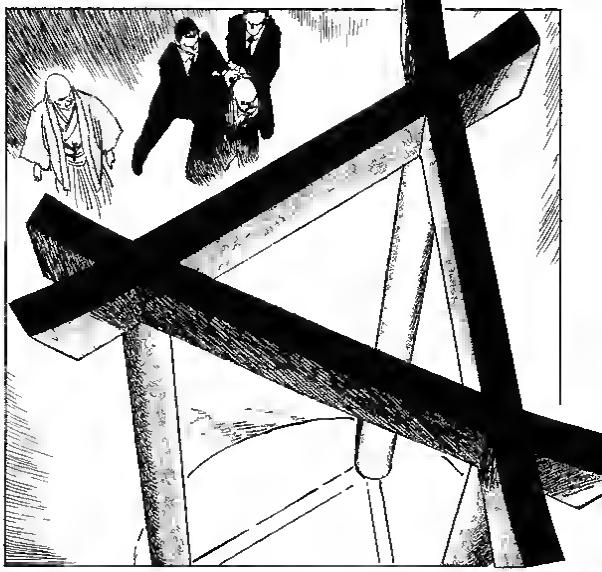
XU FU!!
In 300 BCE, the sorcerer Xu Fu, under orders from Qin Shi Huang, led thousands of men and women to Mount Penglai in search of the elixir of eternal life...
According to legend, he landed in the Kumano region of Japan instead...
THAT IS OUR GREAT LINEAGE! WHO ELSE DO YOU THINK IT WAS THAT BROUGHT RICE FARMING AND IRON-AGE CIVILIZATION TO THE STONE-AGE JOMON PEOPLE!?
SO WAS XU FU THE FOUNDER OF THE KII HATA CLAN!?


WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME ABOUT THIS...? YOU'RE SO CRUEL!
...I accompanied him up to here, but when he looked into the Torii, his upper body vanished right before my eyes..
I was so terrified, I ran away...
Kumano is Mt. Penglai, the holy land of the ascetics! And this is the source of its sacred power!
Xu Fu passed down the family tradition that he had found the entrance to immortality, and had named it Kumano Himorogi!
YOU LEFT MY FATHER TO DIE!
Bring me that man!
Professor Munakata, I only left politics on account of my age. If I return to good health, I can return.
I know which gate leads to death. The only gates that remain are the gate to Yomi, and the gate to immortality!
!

KCH!

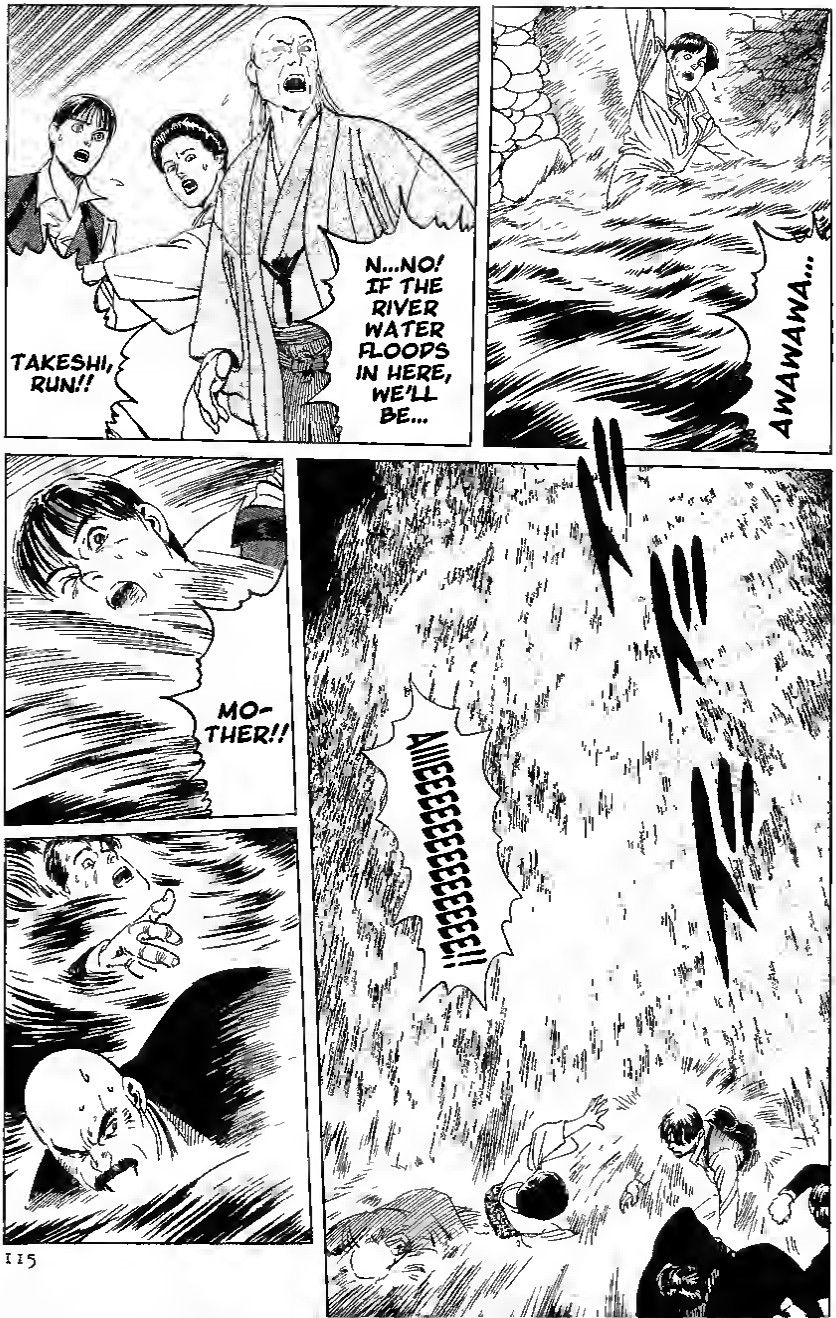

I will have you pass through one of them. Then we will know which gate leads to immortality!

!



Dammit!
WHO'S THERE !?
NO, GOD-DAM-MIT! STAY BACK!

WAAA
AAAAAA
AAAAAA
UUUUUU
GGGG
HHHH!

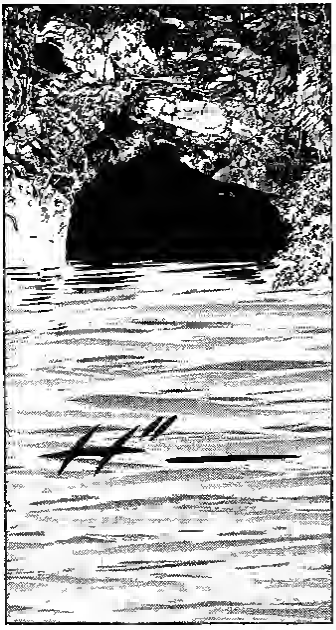

TAKESHI, RUN!!
N...NO! IF THE RIVER WATER FLOODS IN HERE, WE'LL BE...
AWAWAWA...
MO-THER!!
AIIIEEEEEEEEEEEE!!

ULBL
BLBLBL
BLBLLL
HHHH...!
KI
KI!!

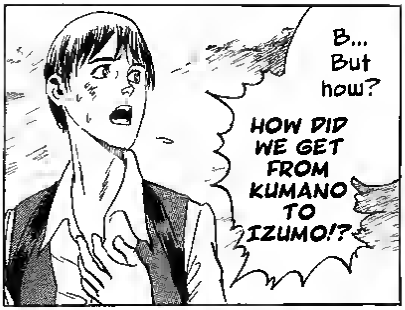
Take...
shi...
Muna-
kata...

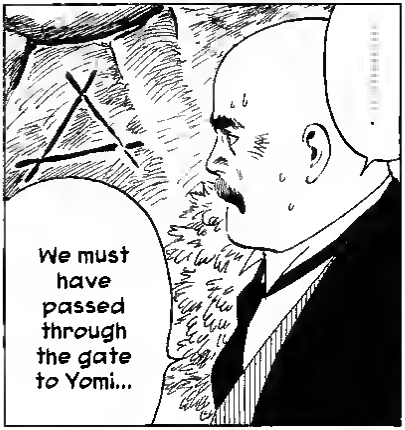
Saying "It hurts... My body is torn in two... Takeshi, please find me..."
...I dreamed about my father a lot these days. I've never told anyone, but he was suffering ..
What's his upper body doing here? Where's the water? Where are we...?
I barely remember his face, but I could tell he was my father...

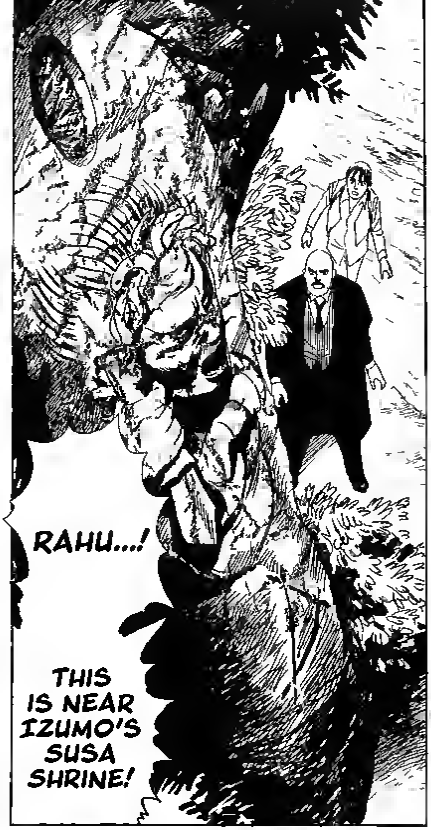
Yomi...?

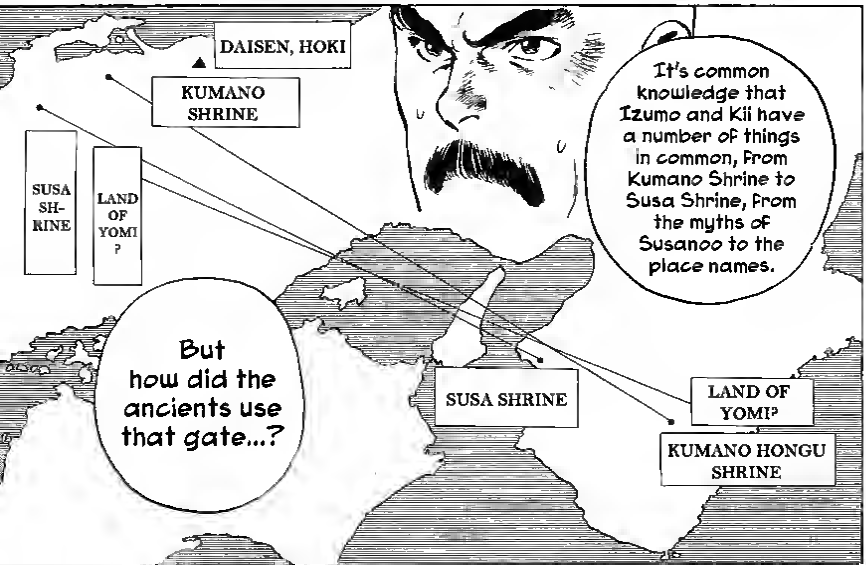

H"

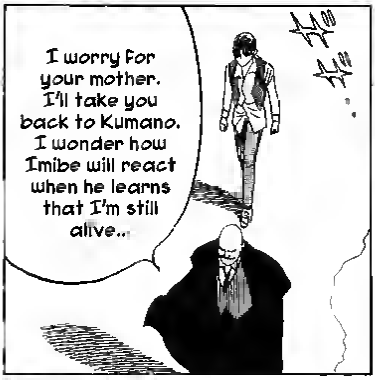
I...IT CAN'T BE!

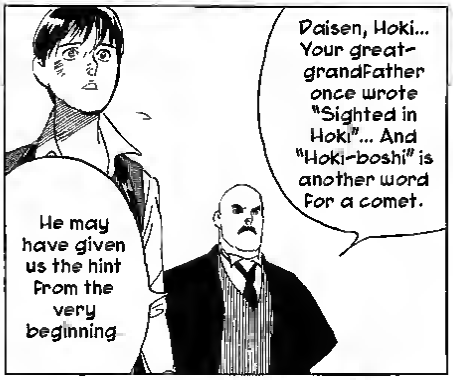

B... But how?
HOW DID WE GET FROM KUMANO TO IZUMO!?


We must have passed through the gate to Yomi...

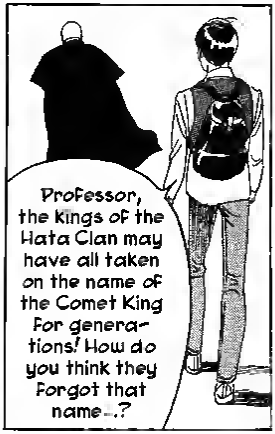

RAHU...!
THIS IS NEAR IZUMO'S SUSA SHRINE!

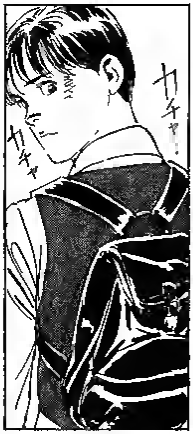

DAISEN, HOKI
KUMANO SHRINE
SUSA SH-RINE
LAND OF YOMI ?
It's common knowledge that Izumo and Kii have a number of things in common, From Kumano Shrine to Susa Shrine, From the myths of Susanoo to the place names.
But how did the ancients use that gate...?
SUSA SHRINE
LAND OF YOMI?
KUMANO HONGU SHRINE

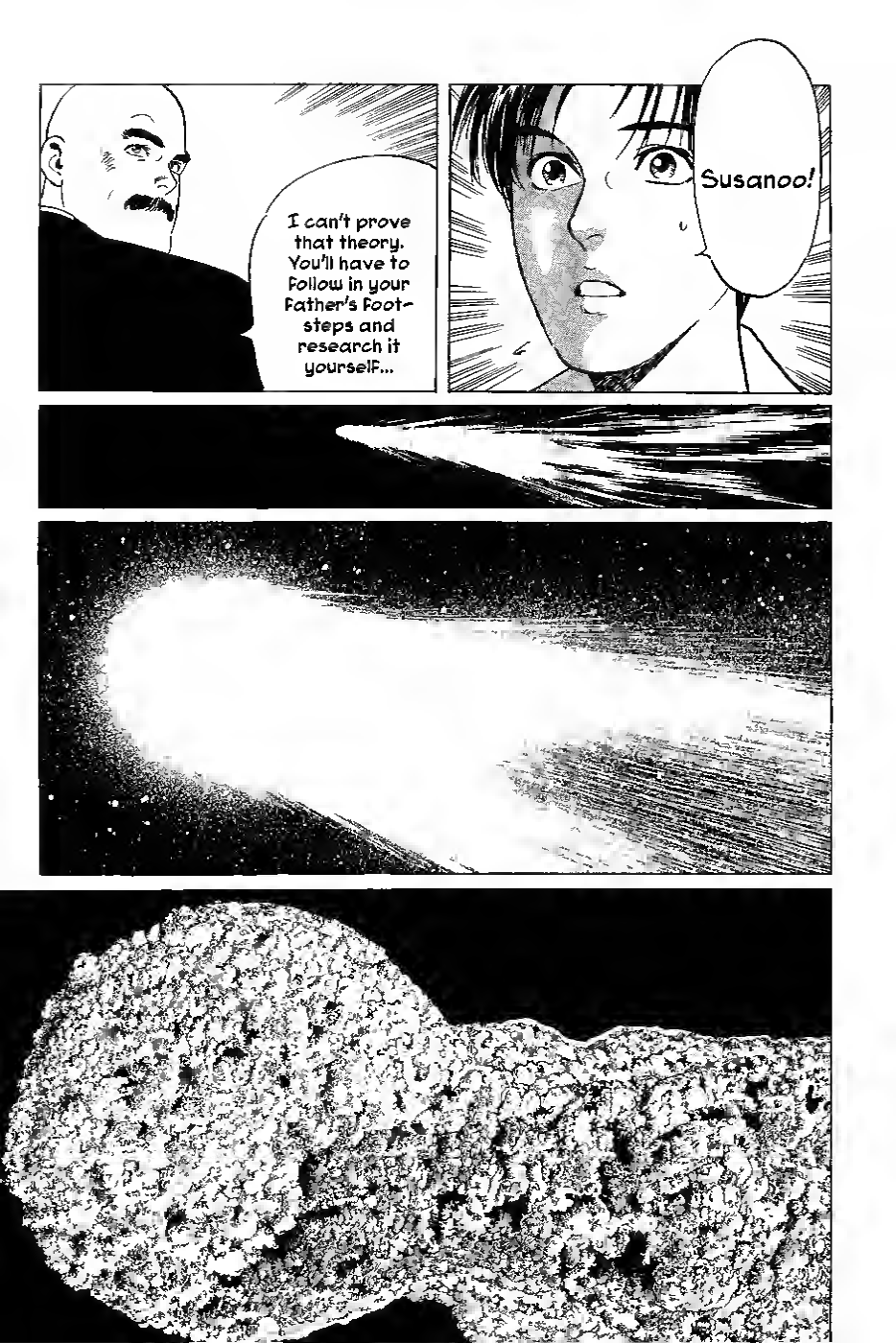

I worry for your mother. I'll take you back to Kumano. I wonder how Imibe will react when he learns that I'm still alive...

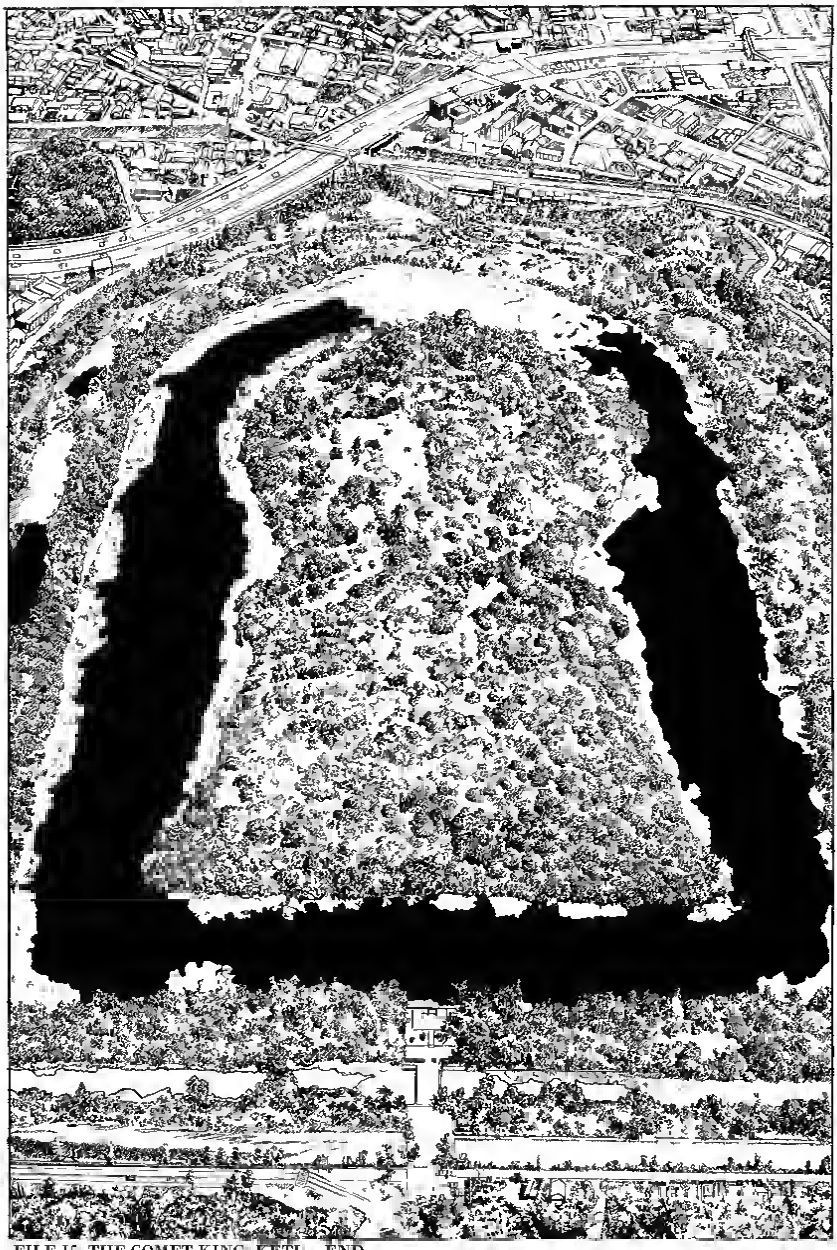

Daisen, Hoki... Your great-grandFather once wrote "Sighted in Hoki"... And "Hoki-boshi" is another word For a comet.
He may have given us the hint From the very beginning

They may not have Forgotten it. That name's come up in mythology time and time again...
Huh?


Professor, the kings of the Hata Clan may have all taken on the name of the Comet King For generations! How do you think they Forgot that name...?


カチャ...
カチャ

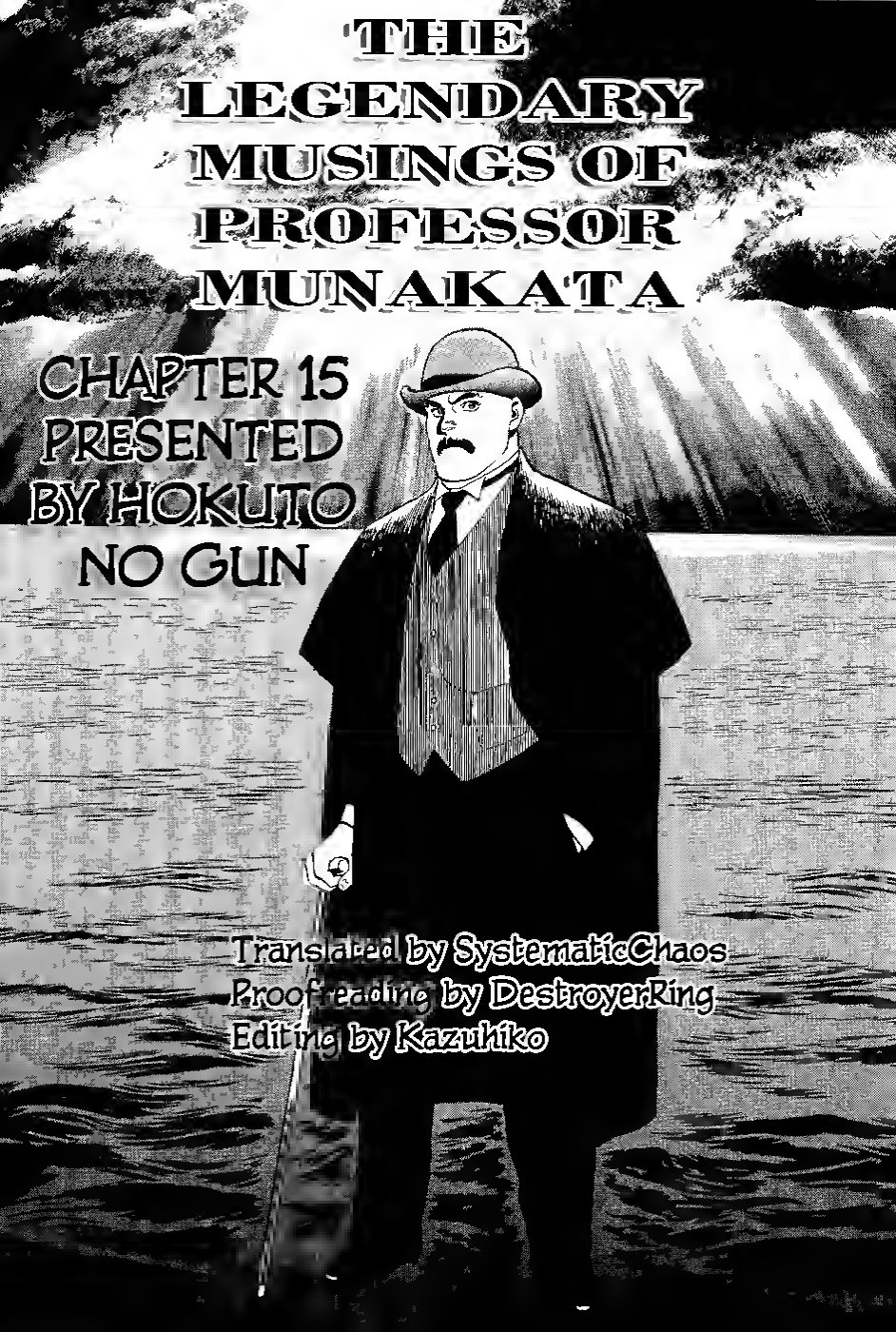

I can't prove that theory. You'll have to follow in your Father's Footsteps and research it yourself...
Susanoo!



THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

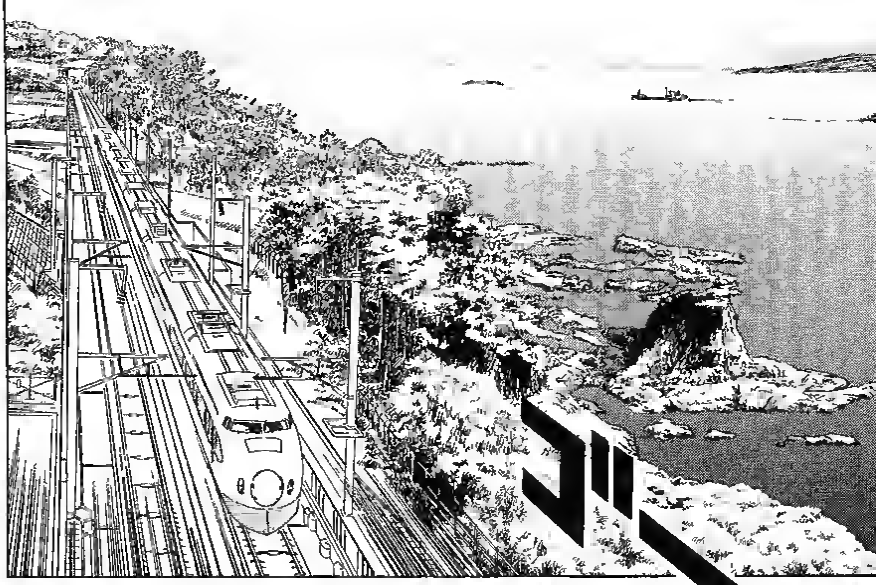
CHAPTER 15

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

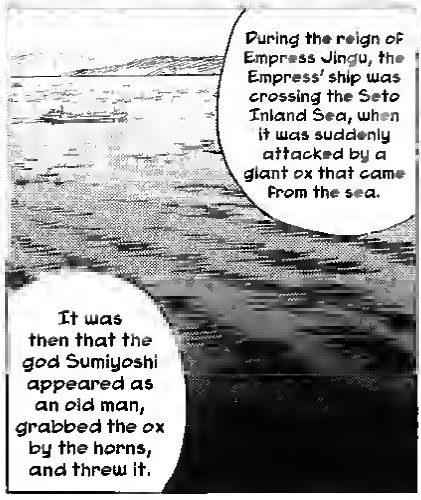


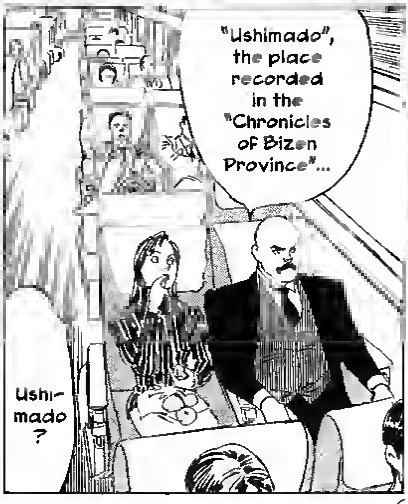
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

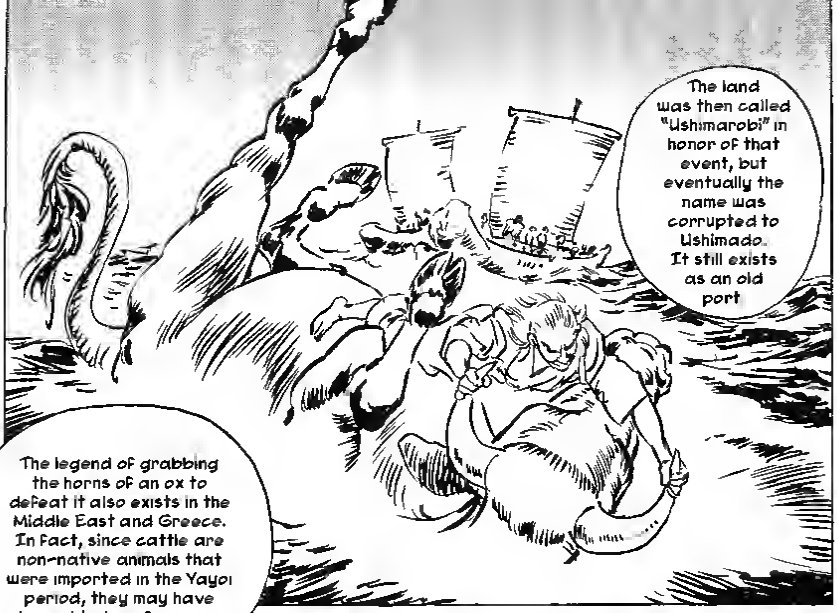
FILE 16:
ADVENT OF THE OX KING

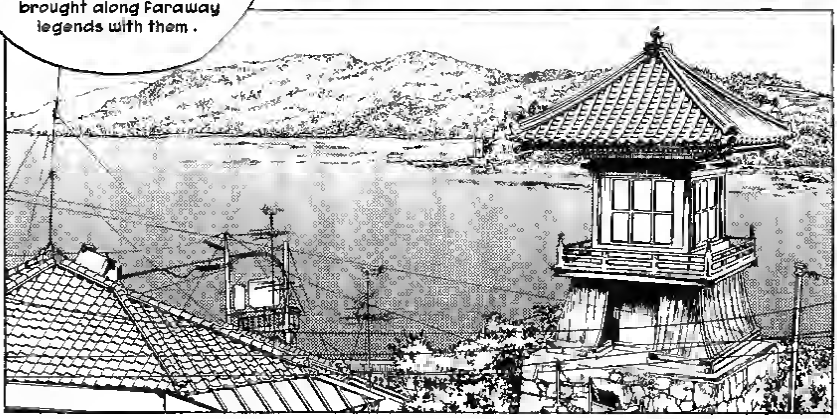

JR

So this year's topic is the "Ox"... And this is just the place for the ox.

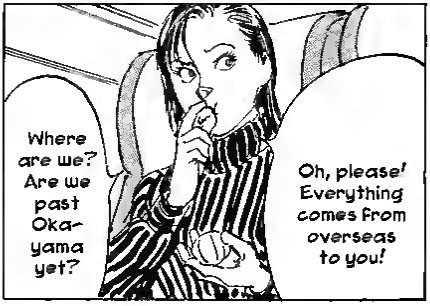

During the reign of Empress Jingu, the Empress' ship was crossing the Seto Inland Sea, when it was suddenly attacked by a giant ox that came from the sea.
It was then that the god Sumiyoshi appeared as an old man, grabbed the ox by the horns, and threw it.

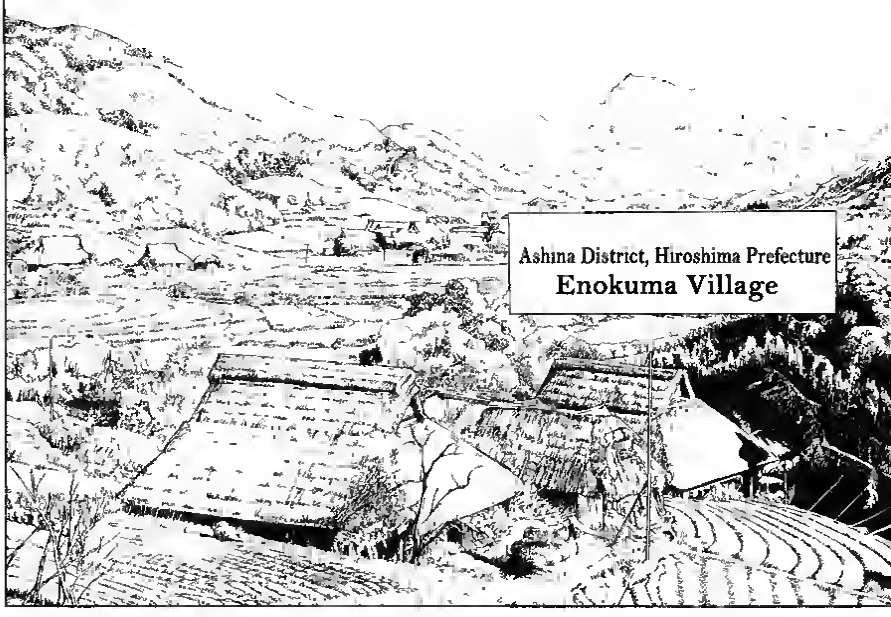

"Ushimado", the place recorded in the "Chronicles of Bizen Province"...
Ushi-mado ?

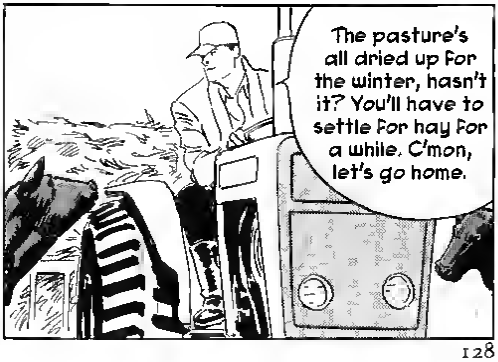

The land was then called "Ushimarobi" in honor of that event, but eventually the name was corrupted to Ushimado. It still exists as an old port
The legend of grabbing the horns of an ox to defeat it also exists in the Middle East and Greece. In fact, since cattle are non-native animals that were imported in the Yayoi period, they may have brought along faraway legends with them.



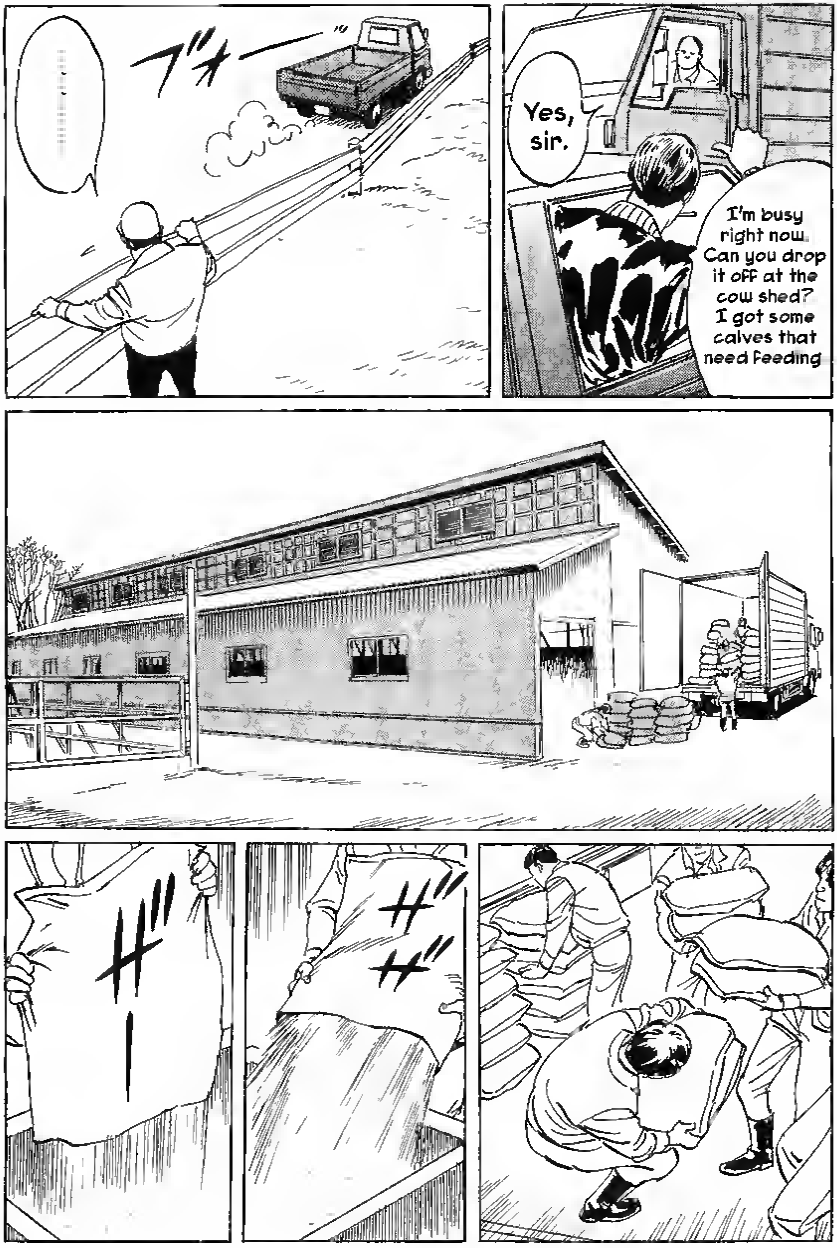
We will be soon Once we pass through Bizen and Bicchu and cross the prefectural border, we will be in the Province of Bingo. Hiroshima Prefecture!

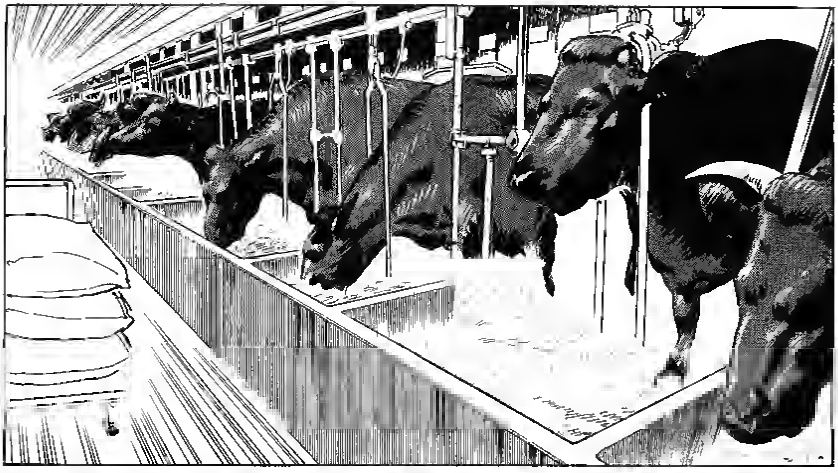

Where are we? Are we past Okayama yet?
Oh, please! Everything comes from overseas to you!

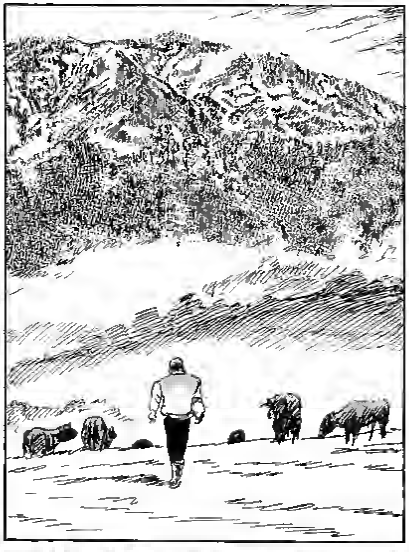

Ashina District, Hiroshima Prefecture
Enokuma Village

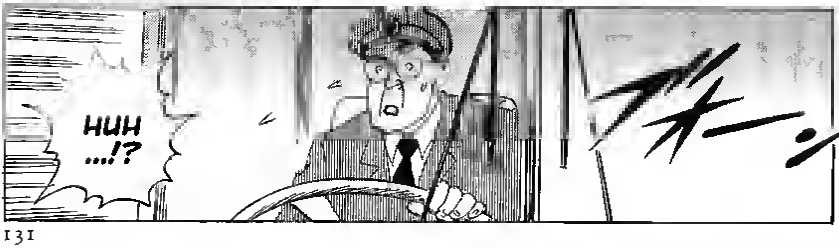

The pasture's all dried up for the winter, hasn't it? You'll have to settle for hay for a while. C'mon, let's go home.

BULLS? NO, WHAT'S THE MATTER!?
HEY, BRO! HAVE YOU SEEN MY FOUR BULLS!?
It'd make sense for them to be here, Bro. You're not hiding anything from me, are you!?
I can't find 'em! They were all making an awful noise last night, and when I took a look around the cow shed, the fence was broken!
We've got the feed for you, Mr. Masaki!
What're you talking about, Hashio!?

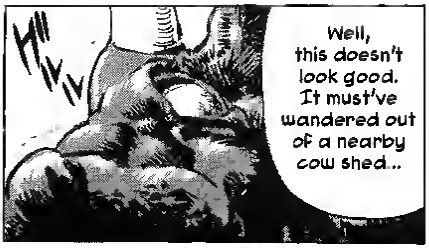

Yes, sir.
I'm busy right now. Can you drop it off at the cow shed? I got some calves that need feeding

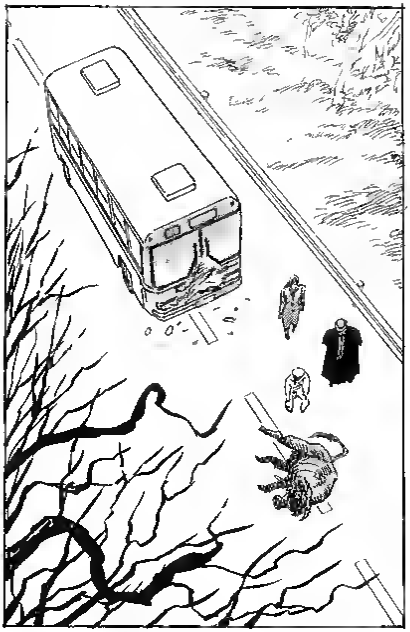


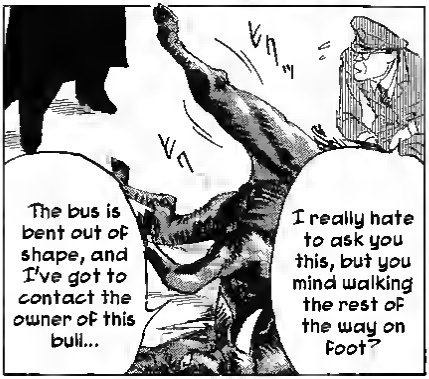


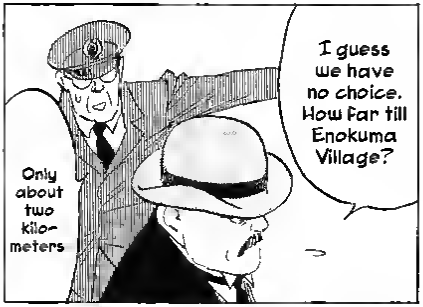

HUH ...!?

AHHH!!

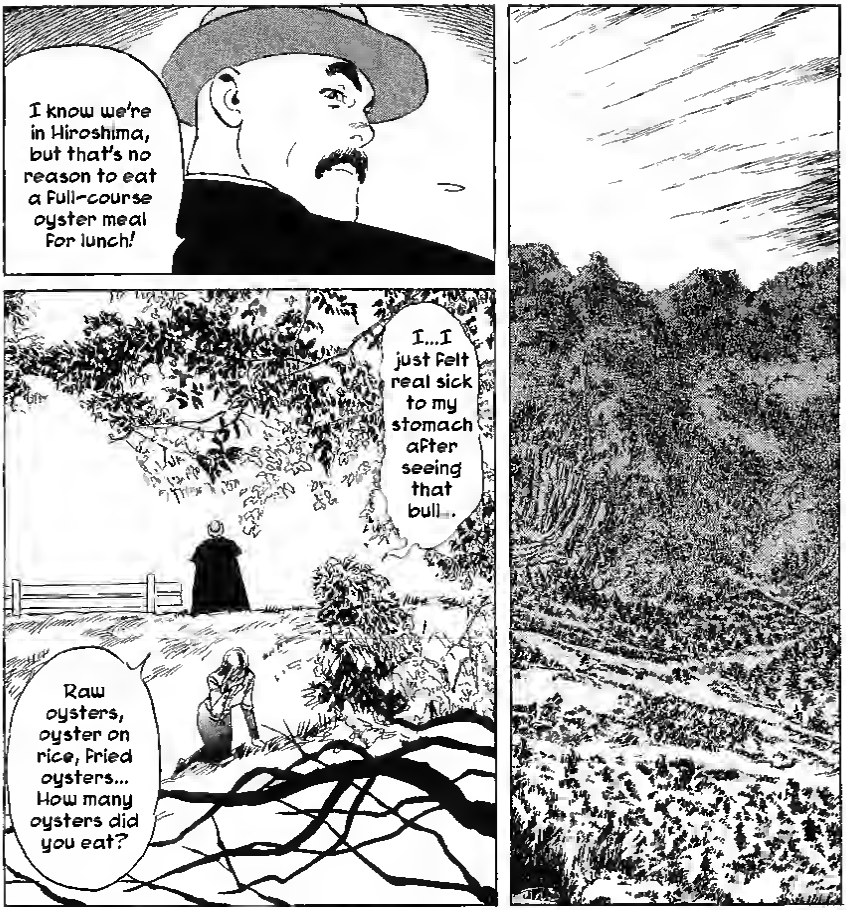

Well, this doesn't look good. It must've wandered out of a nearby cow shed...

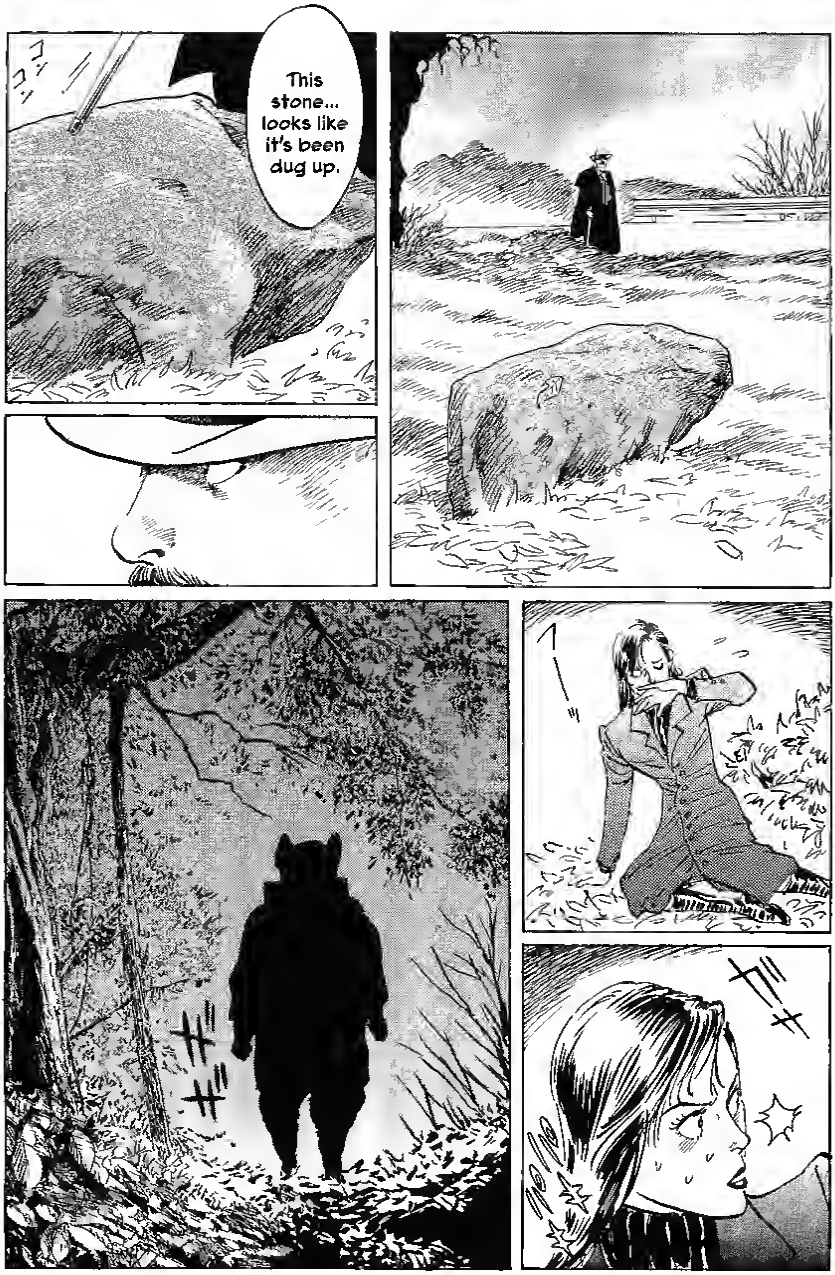



The bus is bent out of shape, and I've got to contact the owner of this bull...
I really hate to ask you this, but you mind walking the rest of the way on foot?


I guess we have no choice. How far till Enokuma Village?
Only about two kilo-meters

Let's go, Ike. This is turning out a lot like the Ushimarobi legend...


I know we're in Hiroshima, but that's no reason to eat a full-course oyster meal for lunch!
I...I just felt real sick to my stomach after seeing that bull...
Raw oysters, oyster on rice, fried oysters... How many oysters did you eat?
Good grief. Now our schedule's off, and it's getting dark out
I'd like to help you out, but I get nauseous myself when I see vomit
Sounds like you're making an oyster stew over there.
Please, stop saying "oyster" so much... Bleeaa-uggh...


This stone... looks like it's been dug up.

AIIIEEEEEEEEE!
Oh, I'm no one dangerous!
WHO'S THERE !?
Well, I'm really sorry about this. I guess I startled her when I was climbing up from the riverbank...

I'm Munakata. Nice to meet you. We had just visited the Nunakuma Shrine in the city of Fukuyama.
It's my post-retirement pastime, to imitate the ascetics. The name's Kojima. I'm on my way to Izumo, then I'm thinking of climbing Mt. Kubote in Oita, Kyushu.
Oh, don't worry, this happens all the time... So you're on a pilgrimage to the sacred mounts...
Nunakuma Shrine? Ohh...
So I've come here to see if the real Enokuma Shrine is in the vicinity of Enokuma Village, as the name suggests.
But I couldn't help but feel that it wasn't. For one, the shrine is in Ashina District, according to the Chronicles.
I'm visiting all the lands referenced in the "Chronicles of Bingo Province". Some say that the "Enokuma Shrine" mentioned in there is actually Nunakuma Shrine, so I went to see for myself...

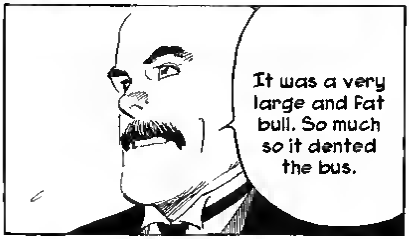
Well, we've finally come across some houses! Why don't we take a little rest at that house over there?
That's just going too far, Hashio! Why would I steal my own little brother's cattle!?
I've disciplined my cattle to never leave the pastures! They would never walk onto the road and get hit by a bus, Bro!

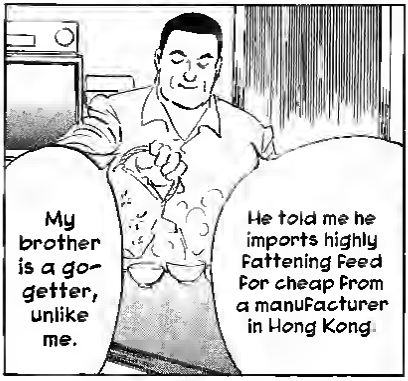
And I hate to say this, but you've got a mere ten cows that you only feed by grazing and mixed feed, so they don't fatten up much or sell very well.
I built my little farm up this far with my talent alone!
I'm currently raising over fifty beef cattle in here. That's the most in this entire area.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD THINK OF ME LIKE THAT!
I'LL BET YOU THOUGHT THAT I WOULDN'T MISS JUST FOUR BULLS, DIDN'T YOU!!
WHAT!? WHAT DO YOU WANT!?
Good evening! May we come in?
They seem to be busy now, Mr. Kojima.

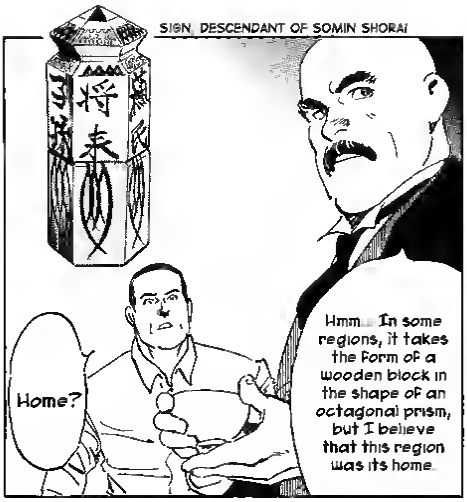
I'M BUSY HERE! I HAVE THREE BULLS TO FIND, AND I HAVE TO CLEAN UP THE DEAD ONE!
I'm really sorry to ask this of you, but we have a fainted woman with us, who's being a great burden to us, so may we have a place to—
GET LOST!
If you need a place to stay, you can rest at my house. It's not far from here.
I see. So that bull belonged to this ranch...
Oh, it's nothing. We truly thank you.
I apologize for my brother being so rude...

Mooooooo!
Mooooooo!
Ohh, I'd be very grateful for that.
There's no inn in this town, so why don't you stay the night? I'm a bachelor, so the house may be a little untidy, but...

DESCENDANT OF SOMIN SHORAI
MAY THE SEVEN MISFORTUNES PERISH
MAY THE SEVEN FORTUNES COME FORTH

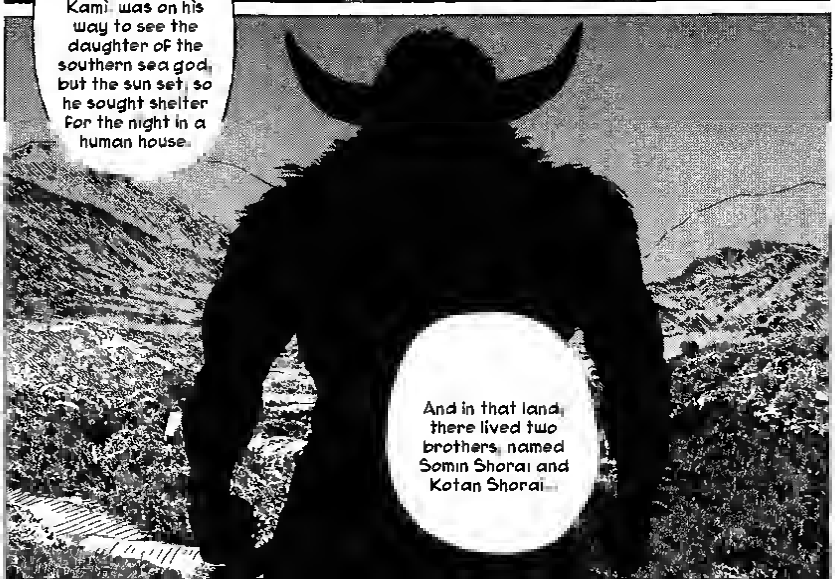

It was a very large and fat bull. So much so it dented the bus.

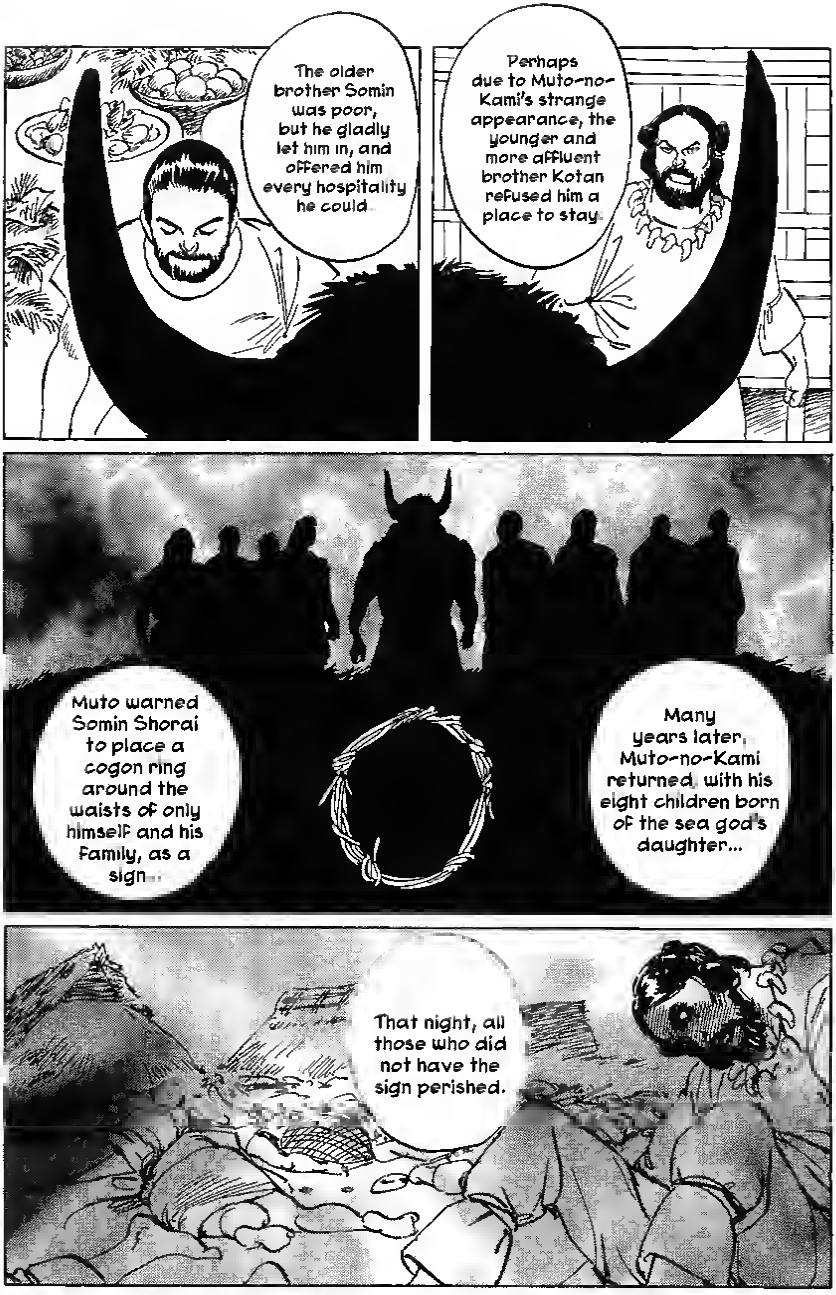

My brother is a go-getter, unlike me.
He told me he imports highly fattening feed for cheap from a manufacturer in Hong Kong.


将来
Hmm... In some regions, it takes the form of a wooden block in the shape of an octagonal prism, but I believe that this region was its home.
Home?

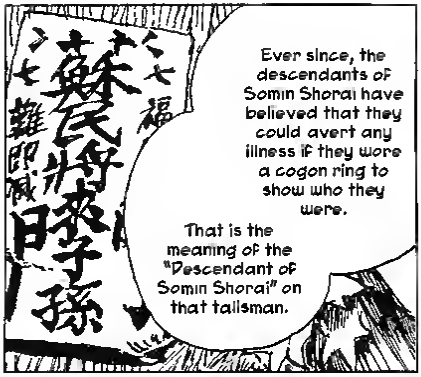
...Oh, that? It's called "Somin Shorai", and I've heard it's a talisman used to ward off evil.

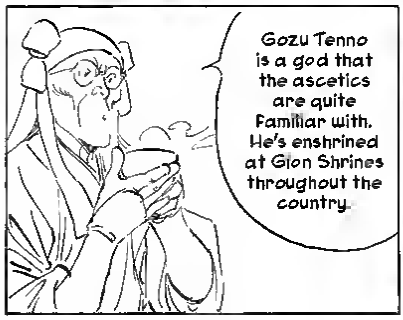
The legend of Somin Shorai was originally recorded in the Chronicles of Bingo Province, and tells of the origin of Eno-kuma Shrine in Bingo.

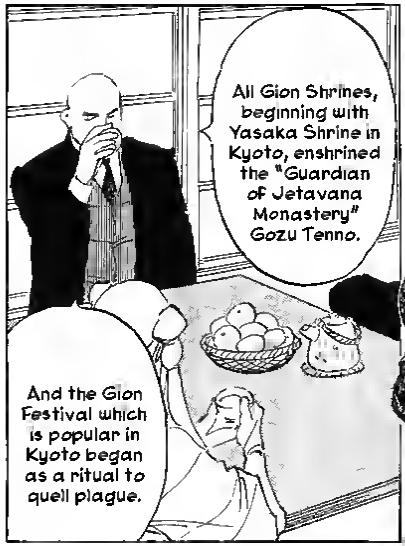

Long ago, a god who lived in the northern sea, named Muto-no-Kami, was on his way to see the daughter of the southern sea god, but the sun set, so he sought shelter for the night in a human house.
And in that land, there lived two brothers, named Somin Shorai and Kotan Shorai...


The older brother Somin was poor, but he gladly let him in, and offered him every hospitality he could.
Perhaps due to Muto-no-Kami's strange appearance, the younger and more affluent brother Kotan refused him a place to stay.
Muto warned Somin Shorai to place a cogon ring around the waists of only himself and his family, as a sign...
Many years later, Muto-no-Kami returned with his eight children born of the sea god's daughter...
That night, all those who did not have the sign perished.

Muto-no-Kami declared himself to be the god Susanoo, but he actually went by another name...


Ever since, the descendants of Somin Shorai have believed that they could avert any illness if they wore a cogon ring to show who they were.
That is the meaning of the "Descendant of Somin Shorai" on that talisman.


Gozu Tenno is a god that the ascetics are quite familiar with. He's enshrined at Gion Shrines throughout the country.

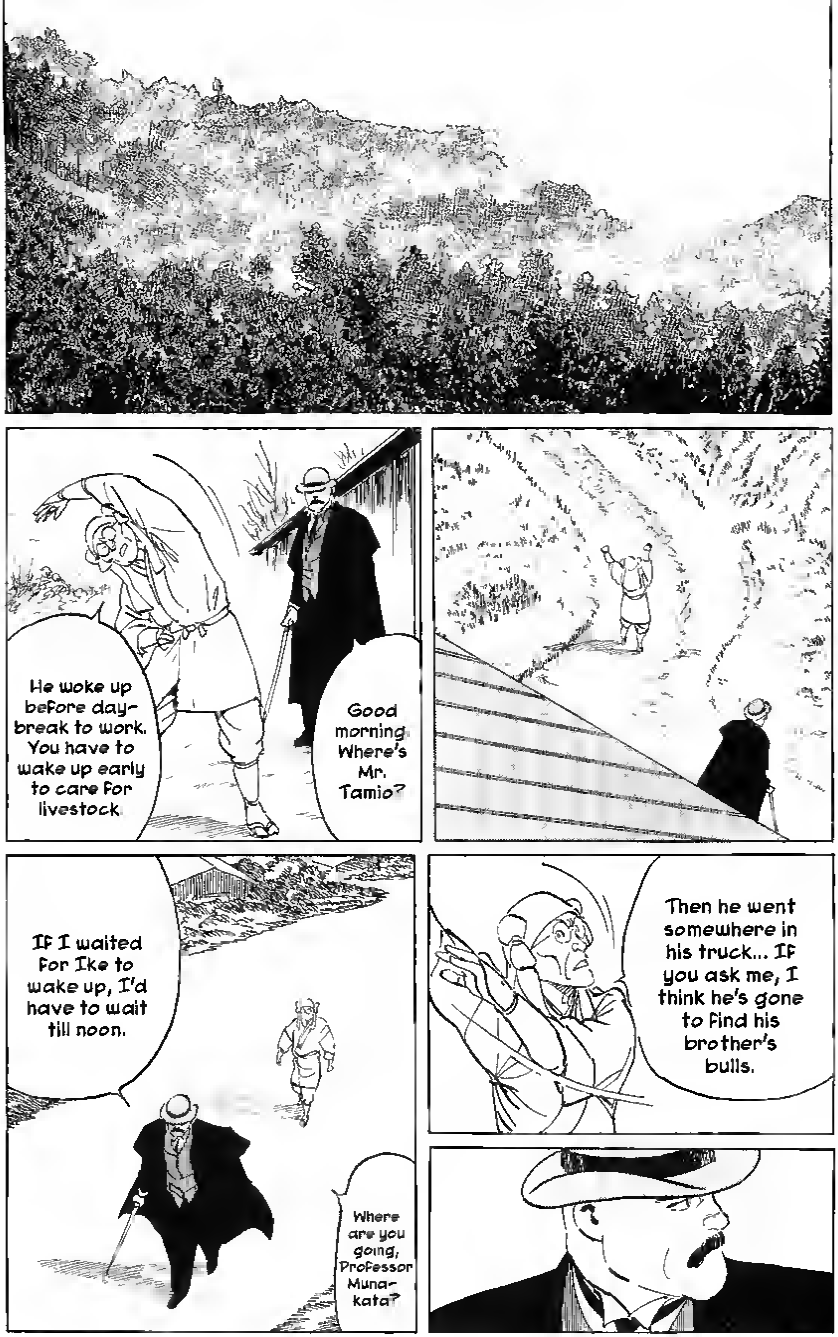

All Gion Shrines, beginning with Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto, enshrined the "Guardian of Jetavana Monastery" Gozu Tenno.
And the Gion Festival which is popular in Kyoto began as a ritual to quell plague.

Gozu Tenno.
He was originally a Hindu god with the head of an ox and the body of a human, said to be the guardian of Jetavana Monastery and he was feared as a god of plague in Japan... And I believe that Enokuma Shrine was dedicated to him!

The cogon ring is a ring made out of cogon grass, and at shrines like Kamigamo, they conduct a "Passing Through the Cogon Ring" ritual to cleanse sins and impurities
Oh, yes, that reminds me...
Number-One in Japan
The Number-One Most Miraculous Place in Japan, Kumano Gooh
Enshrined in Shingu, Kii - Kumano Hayatama Grand Shrine

Kumano's Gooh Seal!?
No.1
Mr. Tamio, I can offer you this as the lodging fee for tonight. Together with the Somin Shorai, it is sure to bring good luck to a household that raises cattle Hahaha!
I stopped by Kumano on my way here, and I received that talisman while I was there
Some say that Kumano Gooh originates from the Chinese medicine "Niu-huang", or bezoar, but I have also heard it refers to Gozu Tenno himself.
Then how about the half-buried stone statue that's sticking up off the village road...?
No, I've never heard of an Enokuma Shrine in this village...

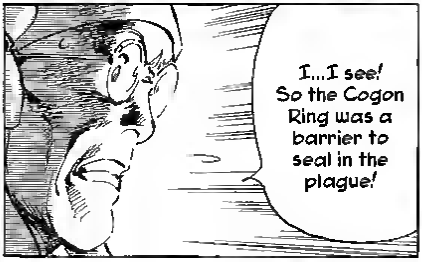
They looked like animal bones, and there were signs that they were burnt...
And our late father scolded us real harshly for that, saying we could be cursed...
Bones!?
Oh, that reminds me! My brother and I were digging up holes in that empty lot for fun, when we found a whole bunch of bones!

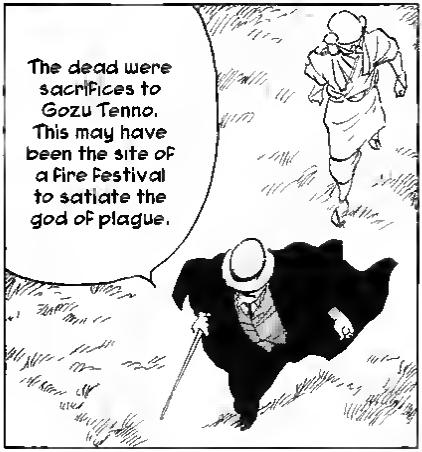

He woke up before daybreak to work. You have to wake up early to care for livestock.
Good morning. Where's Mr. Tamio?
If I waited for Ike to wake up, I'd have to wait till noon.
Where are you going, Professor Munakata?
Then he went somewhere in his truck... If you ask me, I think he's gone to find his brother's bulls.

Mind if I accompany you for a little stroll?
I see. So this is the statue...
Originally, oxen were believed to have the magical power to protect against plague and misfortune. The "Shoku Nihongi" states that an earthen ox was created to quell a national epidemic.
This ancient faith in oxen must have been reflected in Gozu Tenno, the god of plague!
It's somewhat eroded, but I think it used to be an ox.

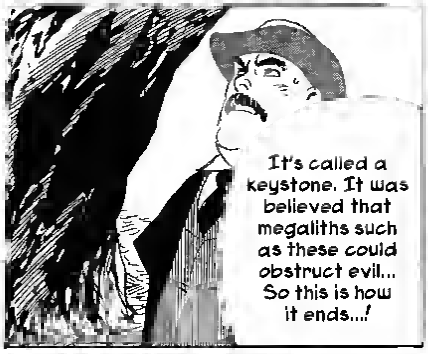
You wouldn't be able to see these in the summertime, when the grass is taller...
These are natural stones, but they've been artificially arranged.
Hmm...
They seem to envelop the whole lot, while constantly intersecting each other.

This is an Onmyodo figure, much like Seimei's pentagram, and is called the "Cogon Ring".
I think as a whole, they're positioned to form two overlapping hexagons.
Oxen and a Cogon Ring.. It would seem that there is a strong possibility that this was the former location of Enokuma Shrine!
Cogon Ring..!
What do you think happened here, Professor Munakata?
I believe they must have burned the corpses of animals here. Corpses riddled with disease...
They may have even included human corpses.

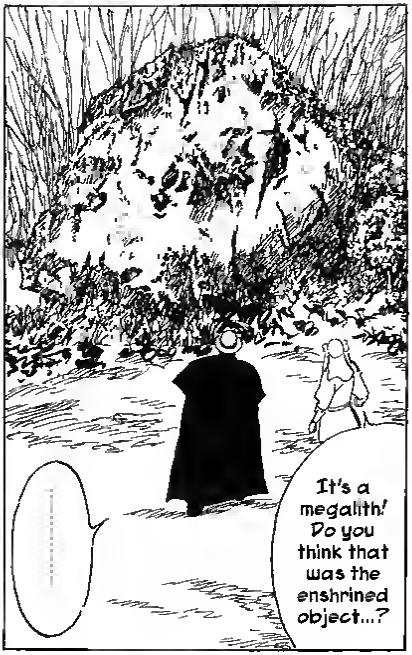

I...I see! So the Cogon Ring was a barrier to seal in the plague!


The dead were sacrifices to Gozu Tenno. This may have been the site of a Fire Festival to satiate the god of plague.

What I want to know is the origin of Gozu Tenno!
One theory traces it back from the Hindu god Gavagriva and connects it to the ox-headed god Ba'al of the Dravidians of Iran.
And going further west, it is even connected to the Grecian monster called the Minotaur...
There must be evidence to back up this flow at Enokuma Shrine, which ought to be called the oldest shrine to Gozu Tenno in Japan.
Even if the shrine itself has fallen to ruin, if it survived in some form...

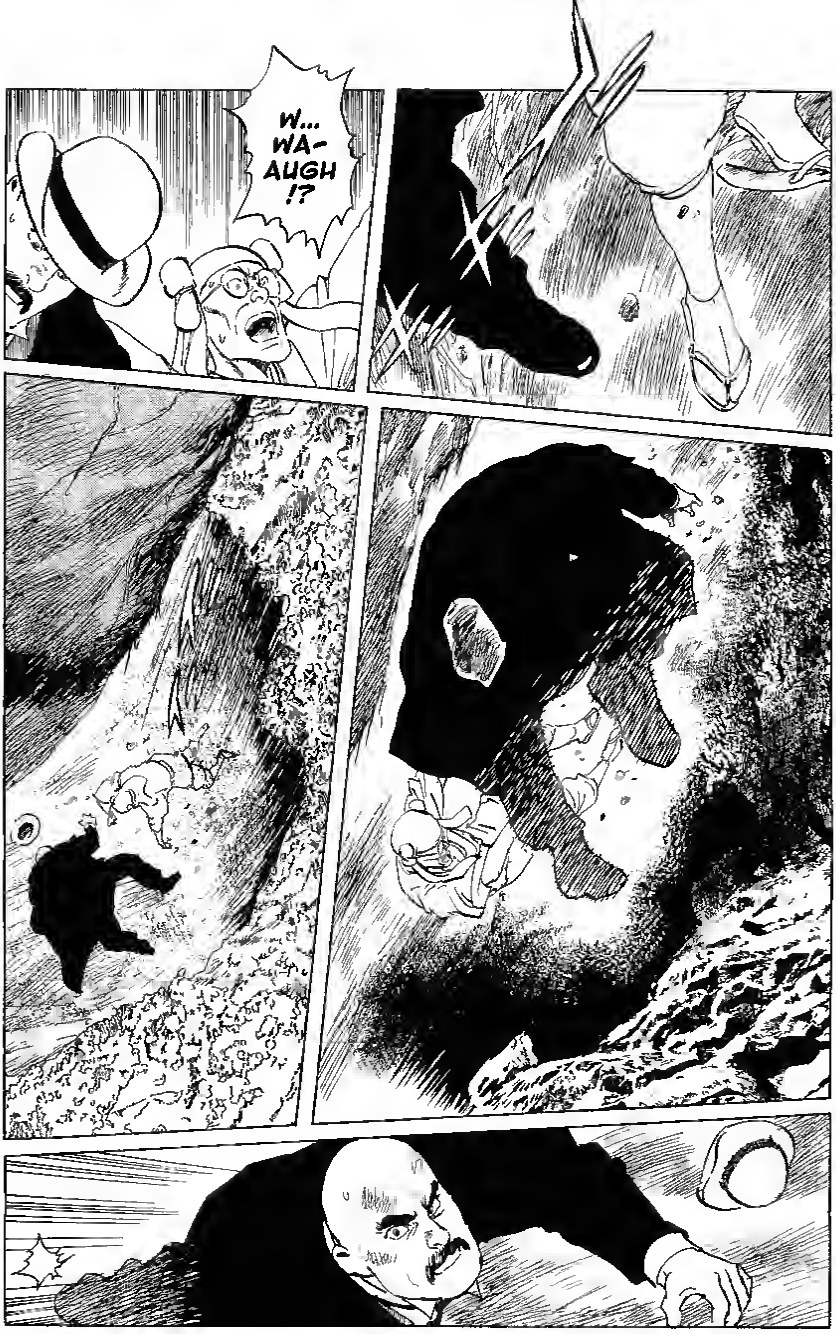

It's called a keystone. It was believed that megaliths such as these could obstruct evil... So this is how it ends...!

Ahh!!


It's a megalith! Do you think that was the enshrined object...?

T... THEY SEEM STRA-NGE ...!

KCH!

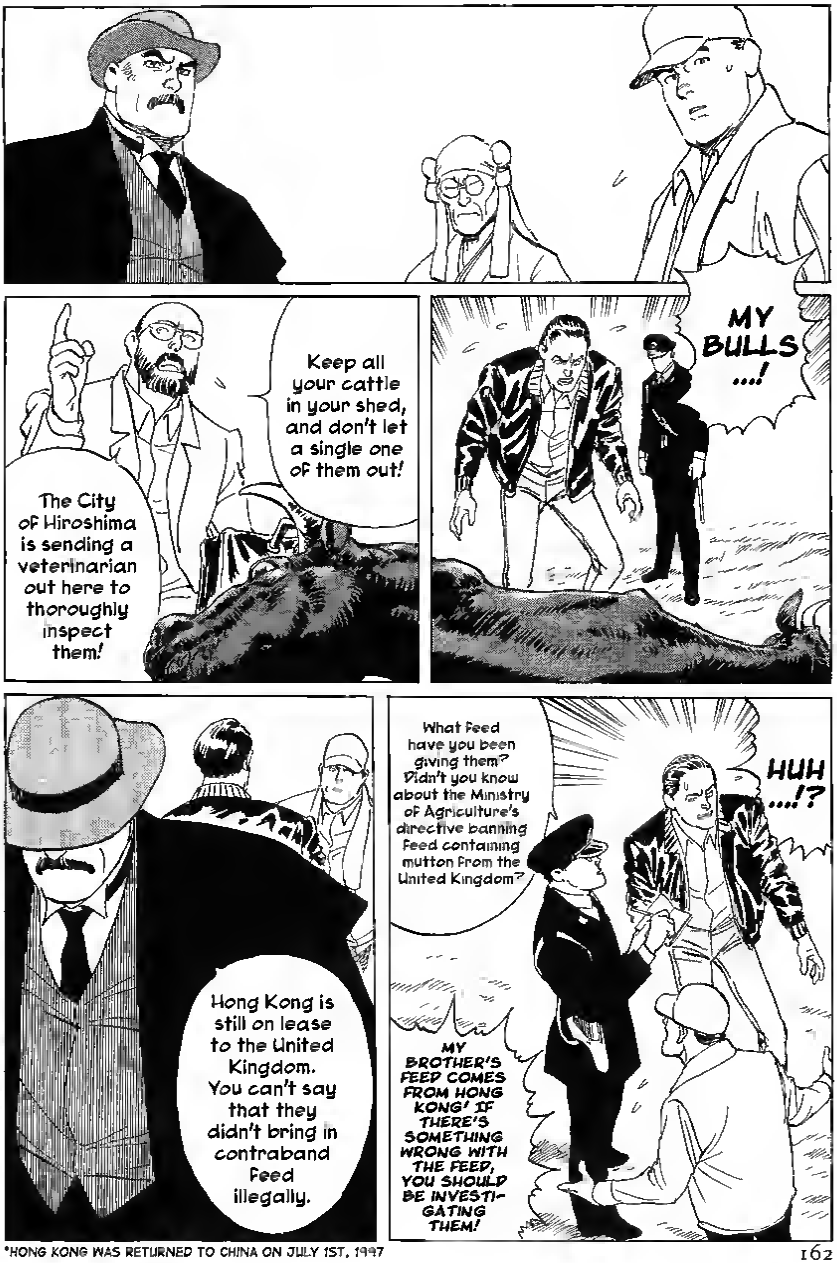

W... WA- AUGH !?

I...
It's the sacred object of Gozu Tenno...!!

B...Bull horns...!? They're so huge...
They don't seem like they belonged to an ordinary bull. I can't affirm this, but it may have been a wild bull from before cattle were domesticated...!
I have heard that there was a giant ancestor of cattle in Europe called the Aurochs, but they went extinct after the Roman Empire.
Did somebody from Europe...?

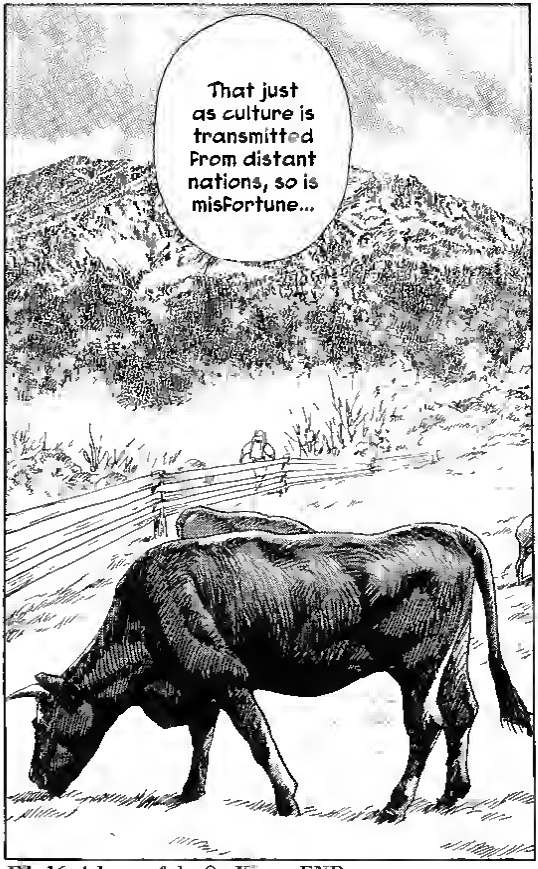
SWOOOAHHHHHH!
They must have been passed from person to person along with human migration, all the way to Japan...
This must be the history of the belief in Gozu Tenno, Professor Munakata.

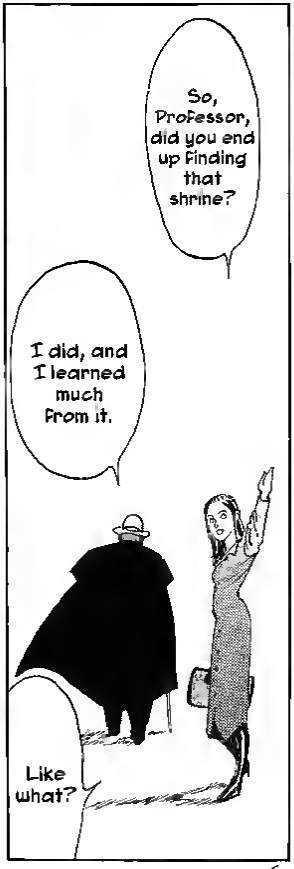
PRO-
FESSOR
MUNA-
KATA!
MR.
KOJIMA!


Keep all your cattle in your shed, and don't let a single one of them out!
The City of Hiroshima is sending a veterinarian out here to thoroughly inspect them!
MY BULLS ...!
Hong Kong is still on lease to the United Kingdom. You can't say that they didn't bring in contraband feed illegally.
What feed have you been giving them? Didn't you know about the Ministry of Agriculture's directive banning feed containing mutton from the United Kingdom?
HUH ...!?
MY BROTHER'S FEED COMES FROM HONG KONG! IF THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE FEED, YOU SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING THEM!

*HONG KONG WAS RETURNED TO CHINA ON JULY 1ST, 1997

We suspect that they are infected with BSE... English Mad Cow Disease!
And since humans can also be infected, this is a critical situation!
I hate to say this, but you're going to have to dispose of all your cattle.

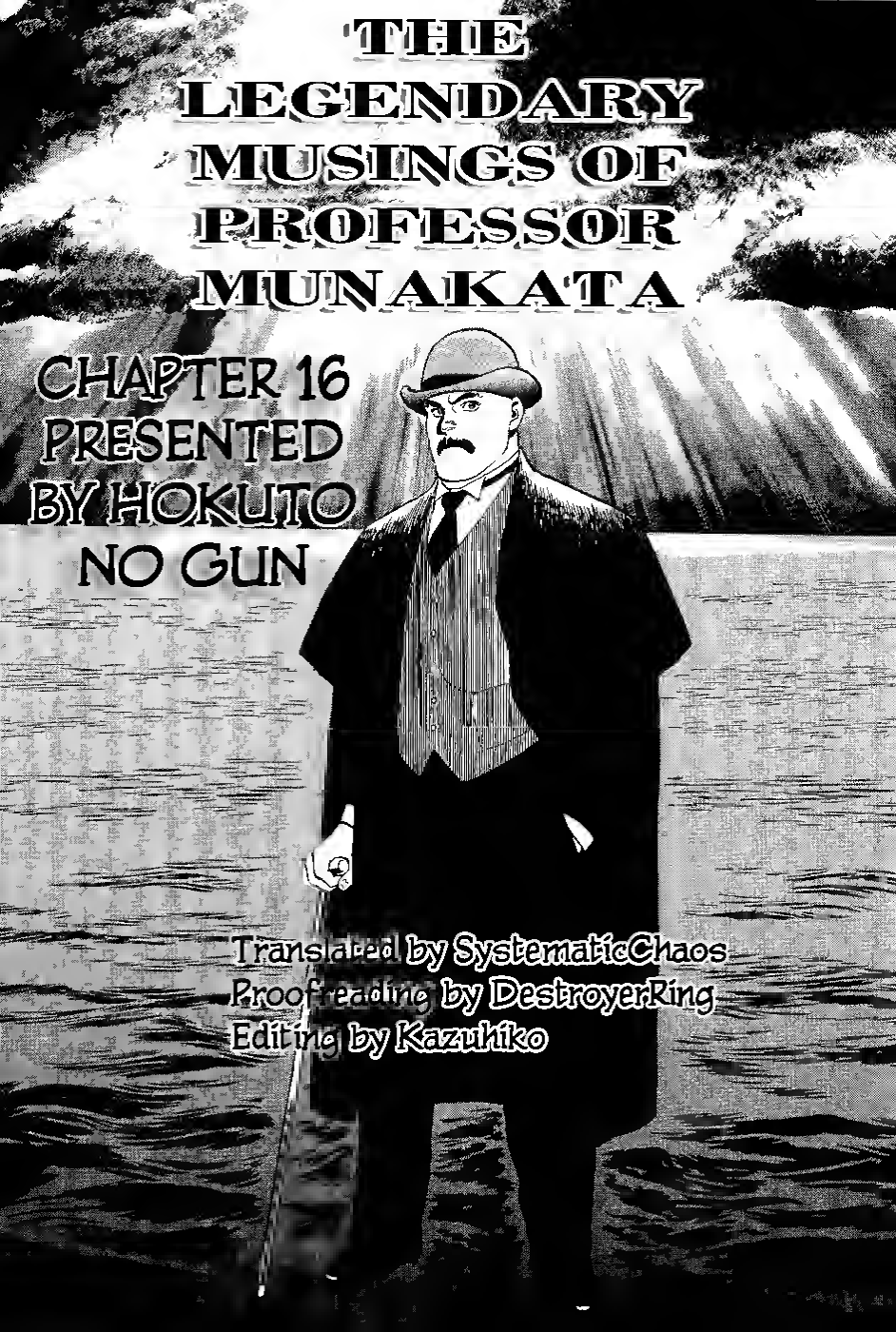

That just as culture is transmitted from distant nations, so is misfortune...


So, Professor, did you end up finding that shrine?
I did, and I learned much from it.
Like what?

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

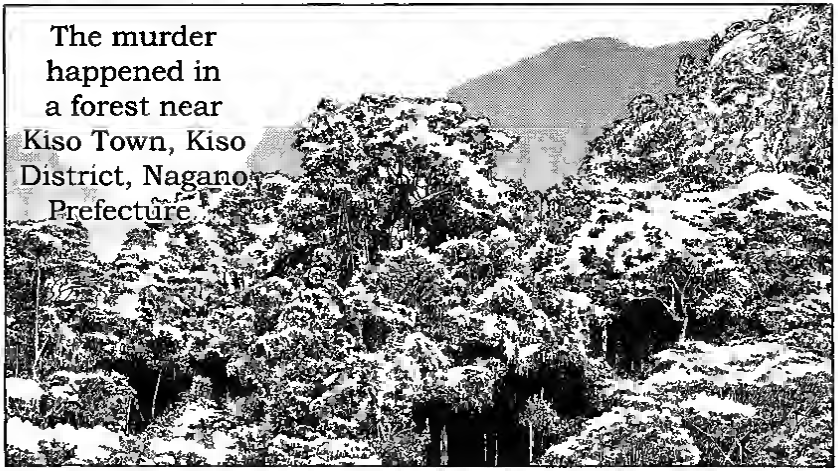
CHAPTER 16

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

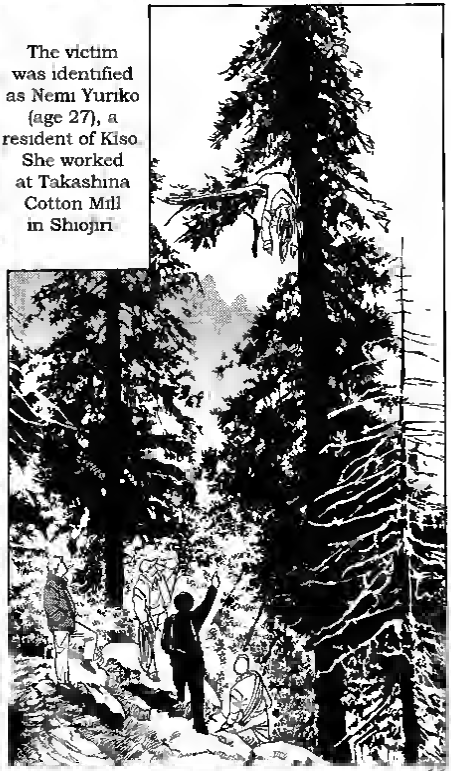


Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

FILE 17: THE URIKOHIME MURDER CASE



The victim was identified as Nemi Yuriko (age 27), a resident of Kiso. She worked at Takashina Cotton Mill in Shiojiri.

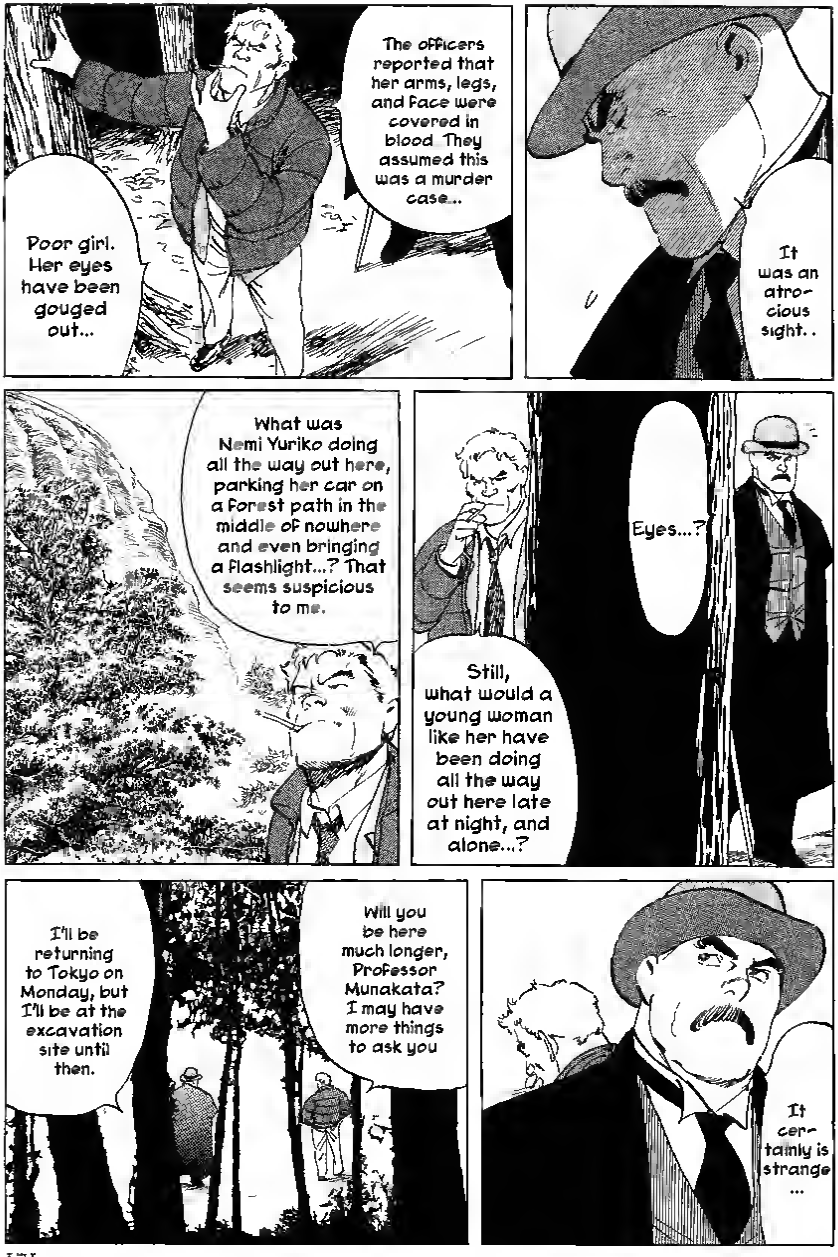


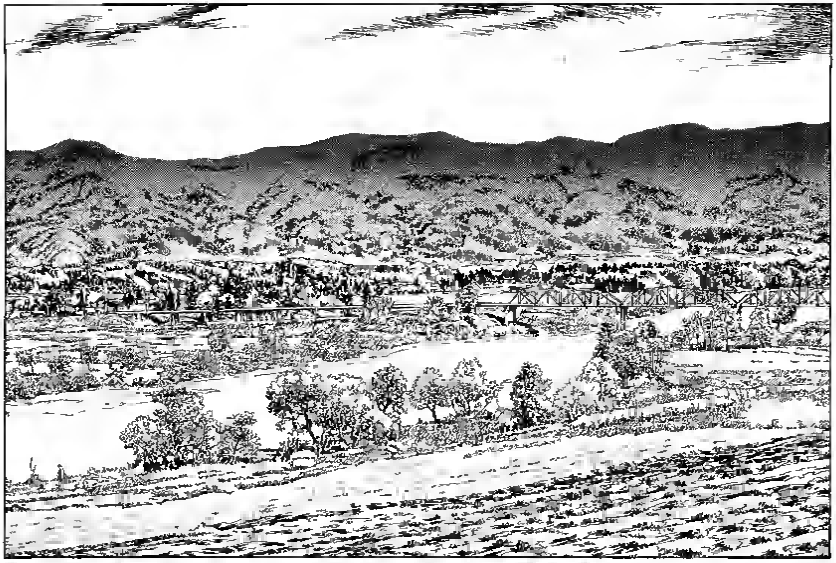
She undoubtedly fell off the path.
Yuriko's car was found parked on a path overlooking the forest She appeared to have left alone late on the Friday night
The first discoverer was a university professor from Tokyo, named Munakata Tadakusu (age 54)
Which means this was either an accident, or...
Nemi Yuriko was known for her beauty, and was preparing for her wedding. Chances of suicide are slim

Oh, no, I still can't say for sure... So, what's a folklore professor doing all the way out here?
I've already told the officers everything I know. But with a detective on the scene, I'm guessing this wasn't an accident.
I'm Nojiri from the Nagano Prefectural Police. May I have a word with you...?
You mean that?

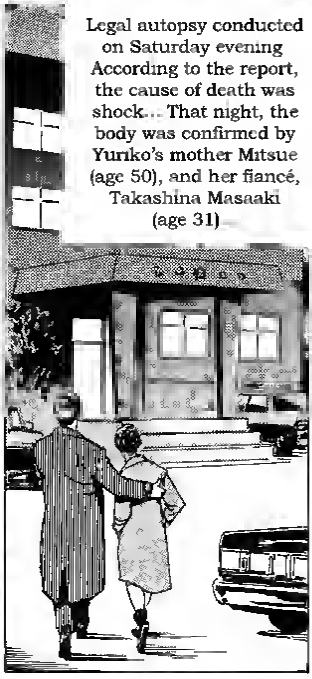
But they found human bones around the stump.
HUMAN BONES !?
The archaeology team of the local Chikuma University discovered it during their preliminary investigation. Oh, thank you.
It's an entirely carbonized tree stump. There must have been a giant cedar tree dominating this area.
I read about it in the evening paper last night, and came up here first thing in the morning.
But they all belonged to young women, and they were scattered around the stump over several generations.
Jomon...? Oh, you mean they're ancient. Don't scare me like that!
They were from the Jomon period, thousands of years ago.

After observing the excavation site and speaking to the team, I decided to stroll around the area for a while, when I saw a murder of crows around a tree—


The officers reported that her arms, legs, and face were covered in blood. They assumed this was a murder case...
Poor girl. Her eyes have been gouged out...
It was an atrocious sight..
What was Nemi Yuriko doing all the way out here, parking her car on a forest path in the middle of nowhere and even bringing a flashlight...? That seems suspicious to me.
Eyes...?
Still, what would a young woman like her have been doing all the way out here late at night, and alone...?
Will you be here much longer, Professor Munakata? I may have more things to ask you
I'll be returning to Tokyo on Monday, but I'll be at the excavation site until then.
It certainly is strange ...



YURIKOOOO!!


Legal autopsy conducted on Saturday evening According to the report, the cause of death was shock... That night, the body was confirmed by Yuriko's mother Mitsue (age 50), and her fiancé, Takashina Masaaki (age 31)

Takashina Masaaki was the heir to the Takashina Cotton Mill. In other words, the next chairman
Yuriko's father was already dead. She was living with her mother.
The most suspicious part of this case is that a similar incident happened two years ago...
自殺?
A Woman's Mysterious Disappearance
投身自殺
Nemi Sakiko Gone Missing
Nemi Yuriko had a stepsister the same age as her named Sakiko.

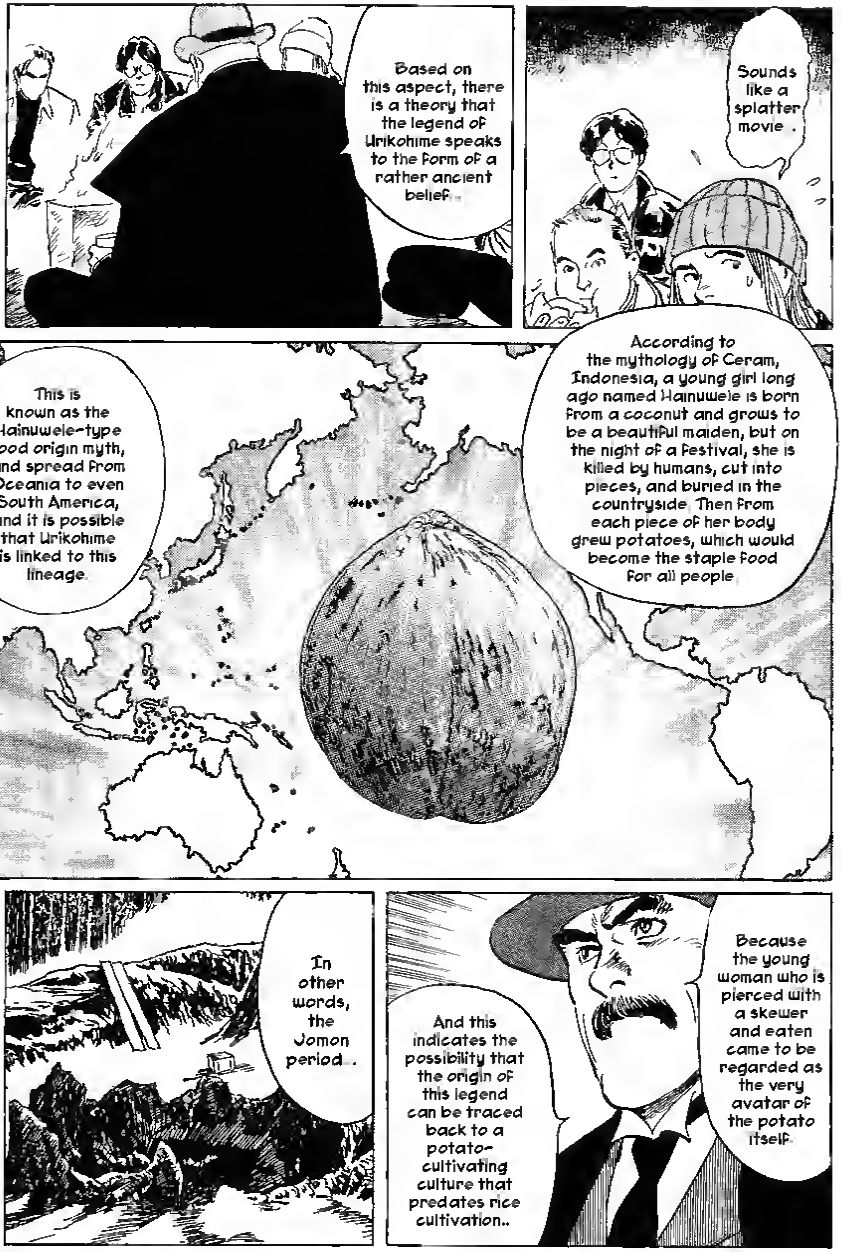
Their parents were both on their second marriage, each with a child from their first marriage. Yuriko and Sakiko were raised almost as twins
After the death of Sakiko's biological father, they were both employed by Takashina Cotton Mill. Before long, Sakiko found a proposal for marriage brought to her.
And her fiancé was also Takashina Masaaki!
And Sakiko vanished right before her wedding!

"Uriko-hime"?
It's a folk tale that spread throughout the nation, and Yanagita Kunio's books show the example from Shimo-Minouchi district of Nagano Prefecture Have you not heard of it?
No, I think that most students haven't even heard its name

But what she found floating down the river was not a giant peach, but a melon
It starts long, long ago, when an old man goes into the mountains to gather firewood, and an old woman goes to the river to do laundry
The tale of Urikohime is much like a female version of Momotaro
Before long, Urikohime grew to be a very beautiful woman, and a nearby rich man asked for her hand in marriage, and she began weaving a garment for her wedding
A young girl was born from inside the melon, so the elderly couple rejoiced, naming her Urikohime, and raised her preciously
But while the old couple was away, a monster called the Amanojaku snuck into the house

Then it entered the bridal palanquin, but as the procession was passing the tree, they heard Urikohime's birdlike cries and the Amanojaku was exposed...
The Amanojaku tied Urikohime to a tree, donned her garment, and disguised as her..
Others say that a flock of birds attacked the Amanojaku and exposed it..
The Amanojaku was captured, cut into three, and abandoned in the countryside... And the roots of the foxtail millet and buckwheat are red because of its blood

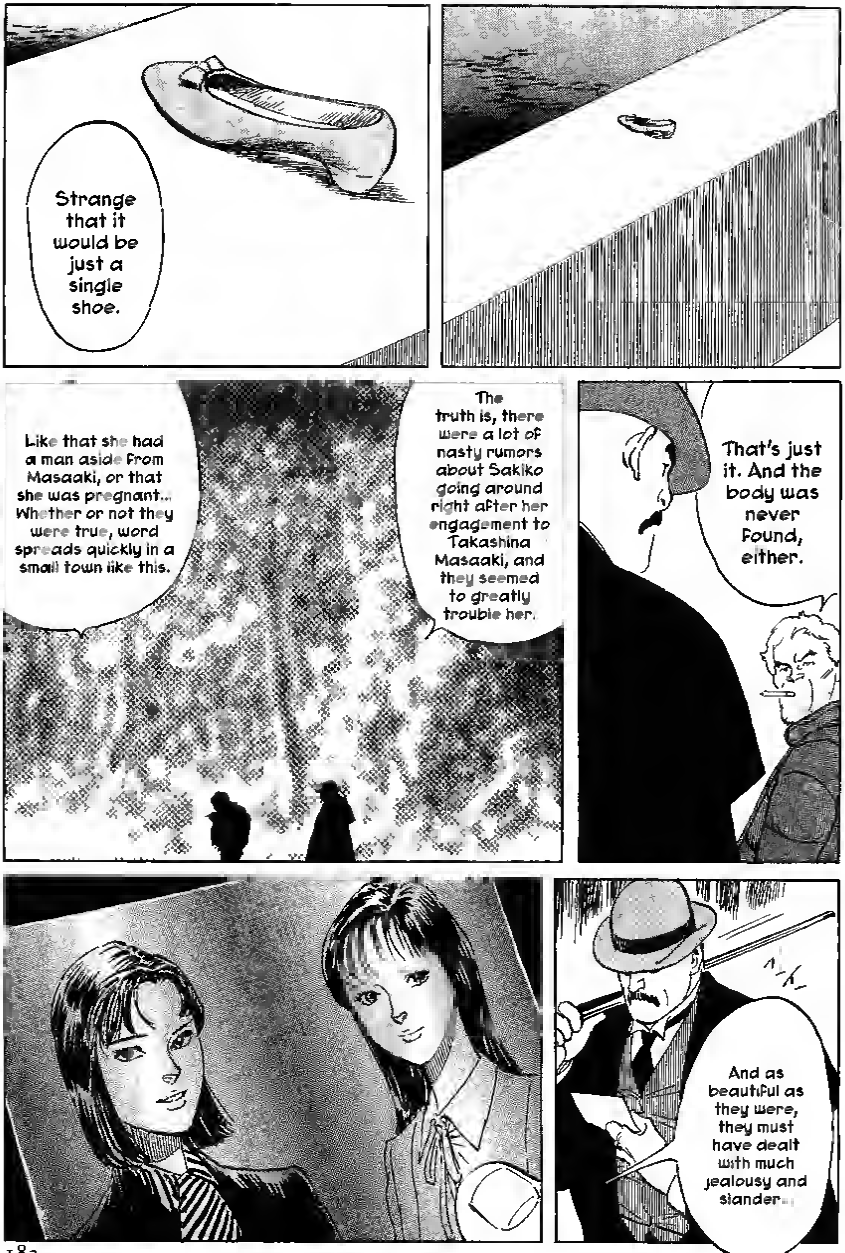
NAMELY, IT IS URIKOHIME THAT IS KILLED AND CUT INTO PIECES!
But in Eastern Japan, centered on Tohoku, the story is slightly different...
And so the real Urikohime lives happily after as the rich man's wife, according to the legend of Urikohime in Western Japan...
Even in Western Japan, in places such as Kyushu, Urikohime is skewered like a potato, and her eyes gouged out.
Not only is it a tragic conclusion where she is killed by the Amanojaku, but her flesh is eaten and her skin flayed...

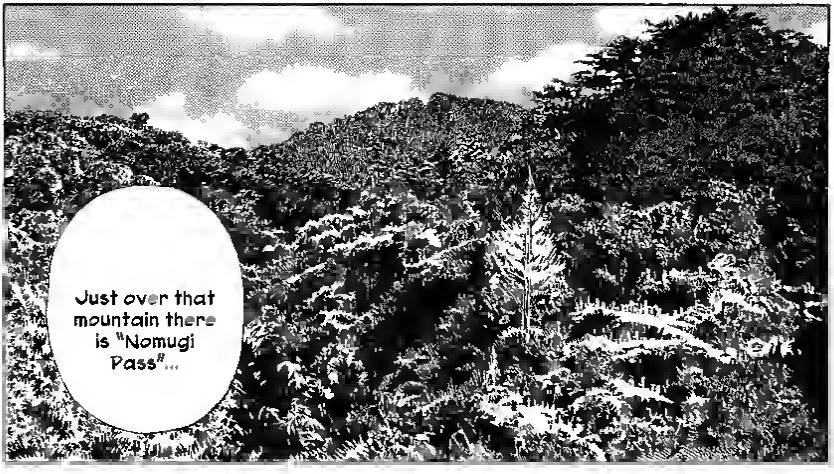

Based on this aspect, there is a theory that the legend of Urikohime speaks to the form of a rather ancient belief.
Sounds like a splatter movie.
This is known as the Hainuwele-type food origin myth, and spread from Oceania to even South America, and it is possible that Urikohime is linked to this lineage.
According to the mythology of Ceram, Indonesia, a young girl long ago named Hainuwele is born from a coconut and grows to be a beautiful maiden, but on the night of a festival, she is killed by humans, cut into pieces, and buried in the countryside. Then from each piece of her body grew potatoes, which would become the staple food for all people.
In other words, the Jomon period.
And this indicates the possibility that the origin of this legend can be traced back to a potato-cultivating culture that predates rice cultivation..
Because the young woman who is pierced with a skewer and eaten came to be regarded as the very avatar of the potato itself.

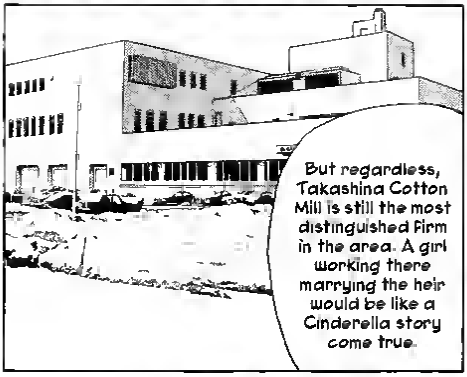
That is the meaning of the legend of Urikohime!
SACRI-FICES!?

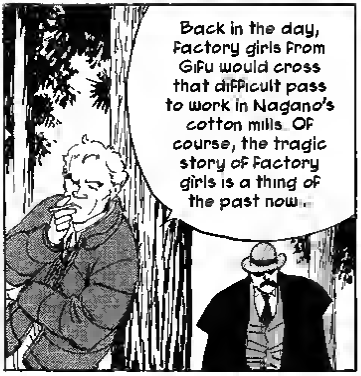
And Nagano is the center of Middle Jomon civilization, what with the Yatsugatake mountain range. It would not be surprising if there were rites of sacrifice to cultivate potatoes as their staple dish.
The American Indians were said to have cut apart young women as sacrifices, and sprinkle the blood on corn seeds to pray for an abundant crop, up until the 19th century. Similar traditions existed in Mexico, India, and even New Guinea.
I see. That explains the human bones around the tree .. So you flew in from Tokyo for that hypothesis.
This is for the young woman that died brutally like Urikohime.
What do you say, Professor Munakata? Can you solve this murder case like you make inferences into ancient cultures?

So she had a stepsister that went missing two years ago...
Well, that case was closed as a suicide
Suicide?
I just stopped by as I was here to inspect the murder scene again. There was something that just didn't sit right with me...
There's a dammed lake called Azusa Lake to the north of Kiso Town, and Sakiko's shoe was found there...

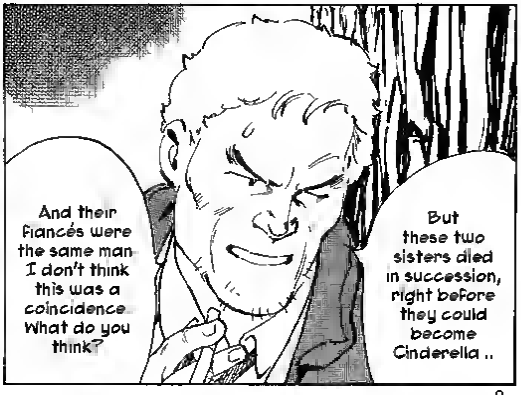

Strange that it would be just a single shoe.
Like that she had a man aside from Masaaki, or that she was pregnant... Whether or not they were true, word spreads quickly in a small town like this.
The truth is, there were a lot of nasty rumors about Sakiko going around right after her engagement to Takashina Masaaki, and they seemed to greatly trouble her.
That's just it. And the body was never found, either.
And as beautiful as they were, they must have dealt with much jealousy and slander...

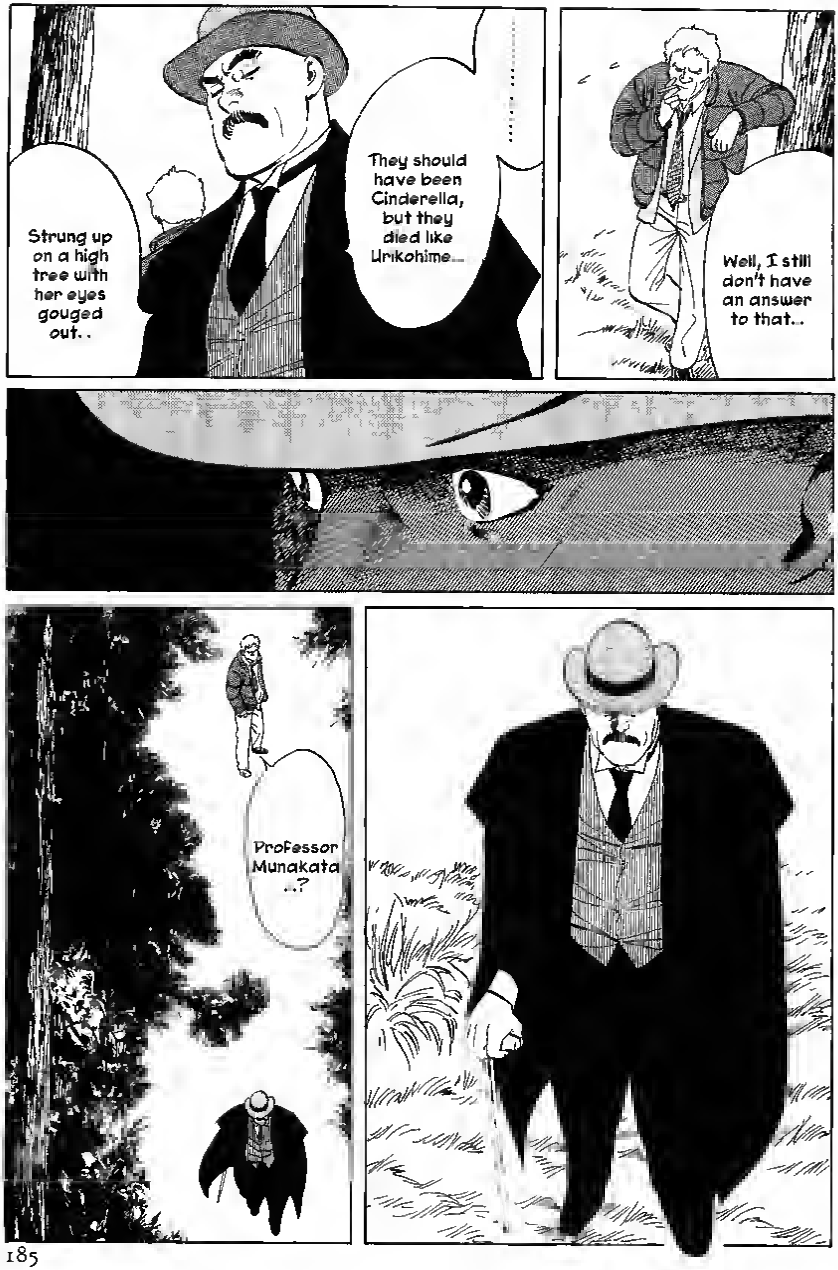

Just over that mountain there is "Nomugi Pass"...


But regardless, Takashina Cotton Mill is still the most distinguished firm in the area. A girl working there marrying the heir would be like a Cinderella story come true.


Back in the day, factory girls from Gifu would cross that difficult pass to work in Nagano's cotton mills. Of course, the tragic story of factory girls is a thing of the past now...

You think this Takashina Masaaki killed them both...? But why?


And their fiancés were the same man. I don't think this was a coincidence. What do you think?
But these two sisters died in succession, right before they could become Cinderella ..

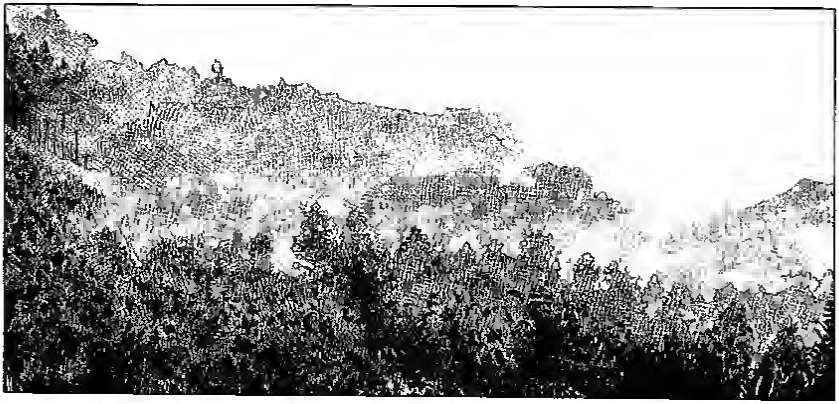

They should have been Cinderella, but they died like Urikohime...
Strung up on a high tree with her eyes gouged out..
Well, I still don't have an answer to that..
Professor Munakata ..?

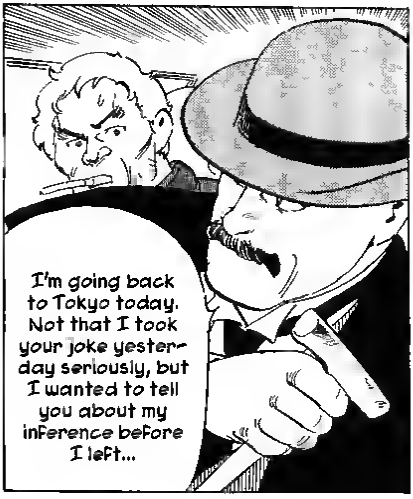
Sunday Afternoon Takashina Masaaki taken in for questioning...
Do you have any idea as to why she went down that forest path so late at night?
None! If I did, I wouldn't have let her go alone!
I did see Yuriko that evening, but she seemed so restless, and she left in a hurry... And that was the last I saw her.
For god's sake, why are you...
When Sakiko went missing, I looked for her so desperately, I thought I would go crazy...
And it was Yukiko who encouraged me and helped me look for her...
Mr Takashina, may I ask you about the case of Nemi Sakiko two years ago?

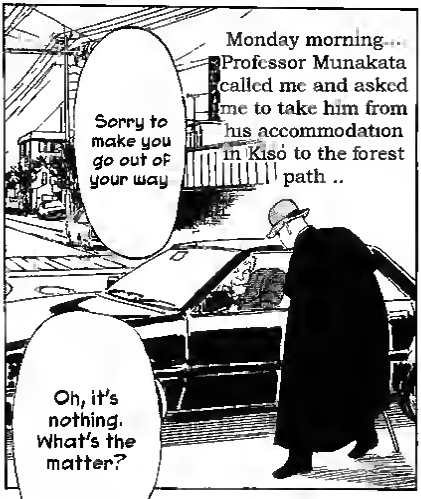
I still don't believe that Sakiko committed suicide.
I intended to marry her no matter what, and I did my best to ignore all the ill rumors about her...
But there was just one thing...
What was that?
A week before she disappeared, she had just finished her bridal gown, so she took me to her house to see it...

I'M SO SORRY! OUR HOUSE WAS BROKEN INTO WHILE I WAS OUT...
W... WHAT HAP-PENED !?
Broken into?
I can understand why that would be a great shock to her,
but every time I saw her since, she seemed so frightened she could barely speak ..

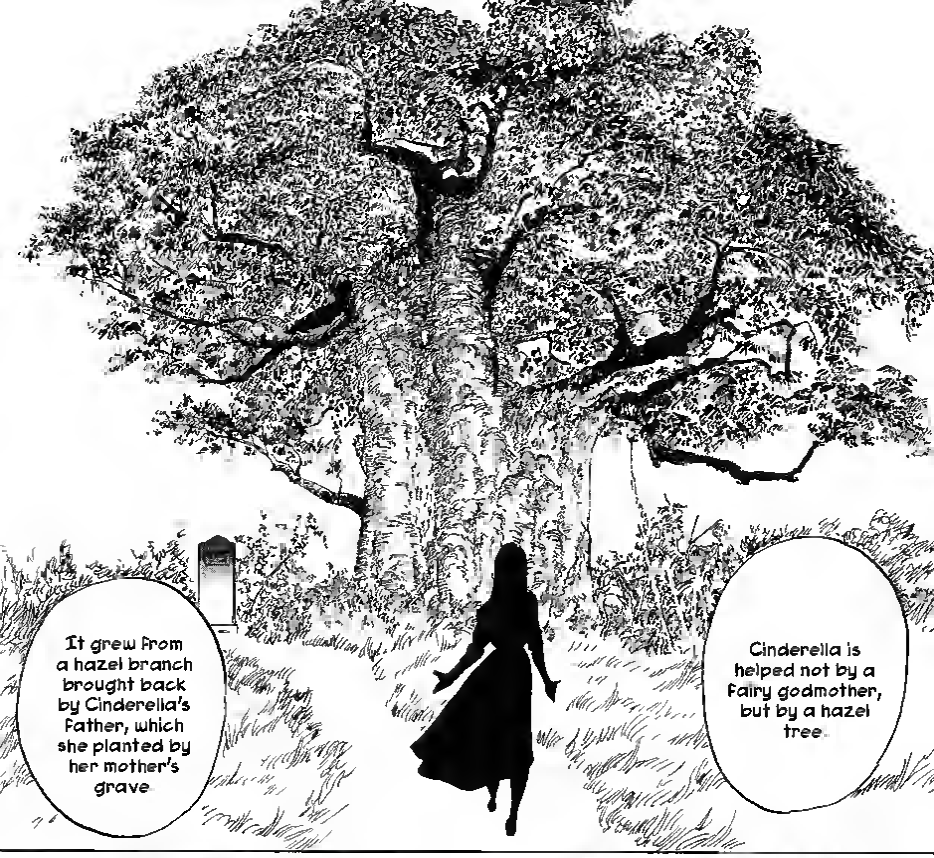
Mr. Takashina, could it be that you were already seeing Yuriko even back then?
Huh?
Hmm... Her bridal gown, huh...
THAT'S JUST... TOO CRUEL!!
And when Yuriko learned of this truth, you killed her..
You wanted to marry Yuriko, so you spread rumors about Sakiko so she would leave you, but when she didn't, you killed her.
W...WHAT ARE YOU INSINUATING!?
Urikohime was attacked by the Amanojaku when she was weaving her bridal gown...

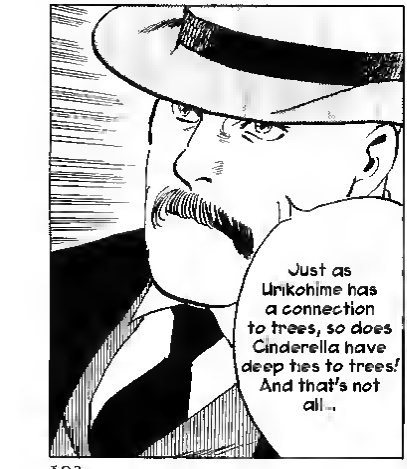



I'm going back to Tokyo today. Not that I took your joke yesterday seriously, but I wanted to tell you about my inference before I left...


Monday morning... Professor Munakata called me and asked me to take him from his accommodation in Kisò to the forest path ..
Sorry to make you go out of your way
Oh, it's nothing. What's the matter?

What? Urikohime and Cinderella ...?
I'm saying that both of these Folk tales may have originated From the same prototype. It occurred to me as I was talking to you yesterday.
Just wait A detective always explains things in a roundabout way. I want to talk about it as I thought it
I know it! A sorcerer or something sends her off with glass slippers and a pumpkin coach to go to the ball... But what does that have to do with any of this!?
You know the story of Cinderella, don't you? Long ago...
That is the tale of Cinderella as it is generally known, but the Grimm Fairy tale is rather different.

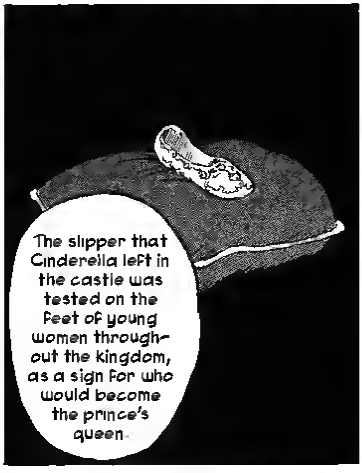

It grew from a hazel branch brought back by Cinderella's father, which she planted by her mother's grave.
Cinderella is helped not by a fairy godmother, but by a hazel tree.


Just as Urikohime has a connection to trees, so does Cinderella have deep ties to trees! And that's not all...

The night of the ball, the dress and the slippers are produced by this tree.

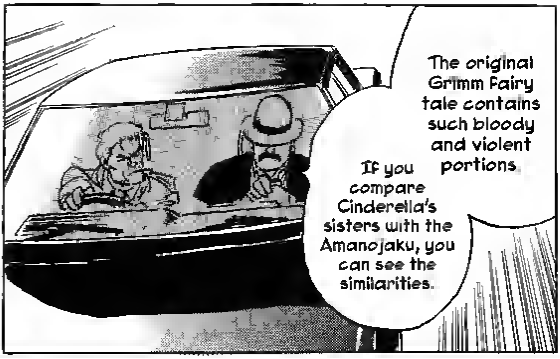
Just as the birds living in the tree exposed the Amanojaku, so they aided Cinderella...

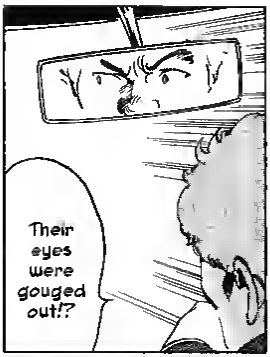
Cinderella's stepsisters even cut off their own toes and heels with a kitchen knife just so they could fit into the small slipper.

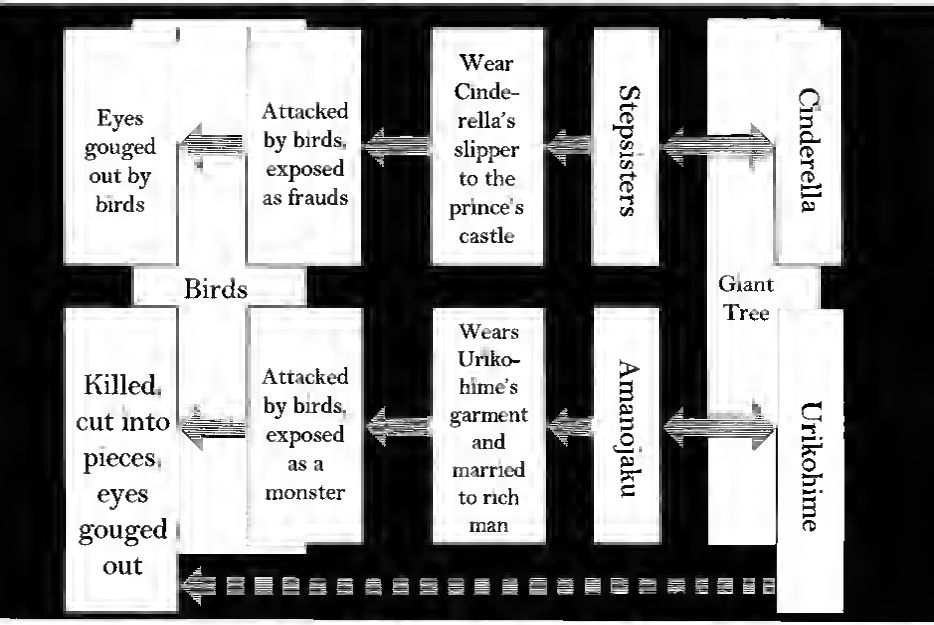

The slipper that Cinderella left in the castle was tested on the feet of young women throughout the kingdom, as a sign for who would become the prince's queen.

Furthermore, when Cinderella was being brought into the castle, her stepsisters were allowed to accompany her, but they were again attacked by the birds, and their eyes were gouged out.

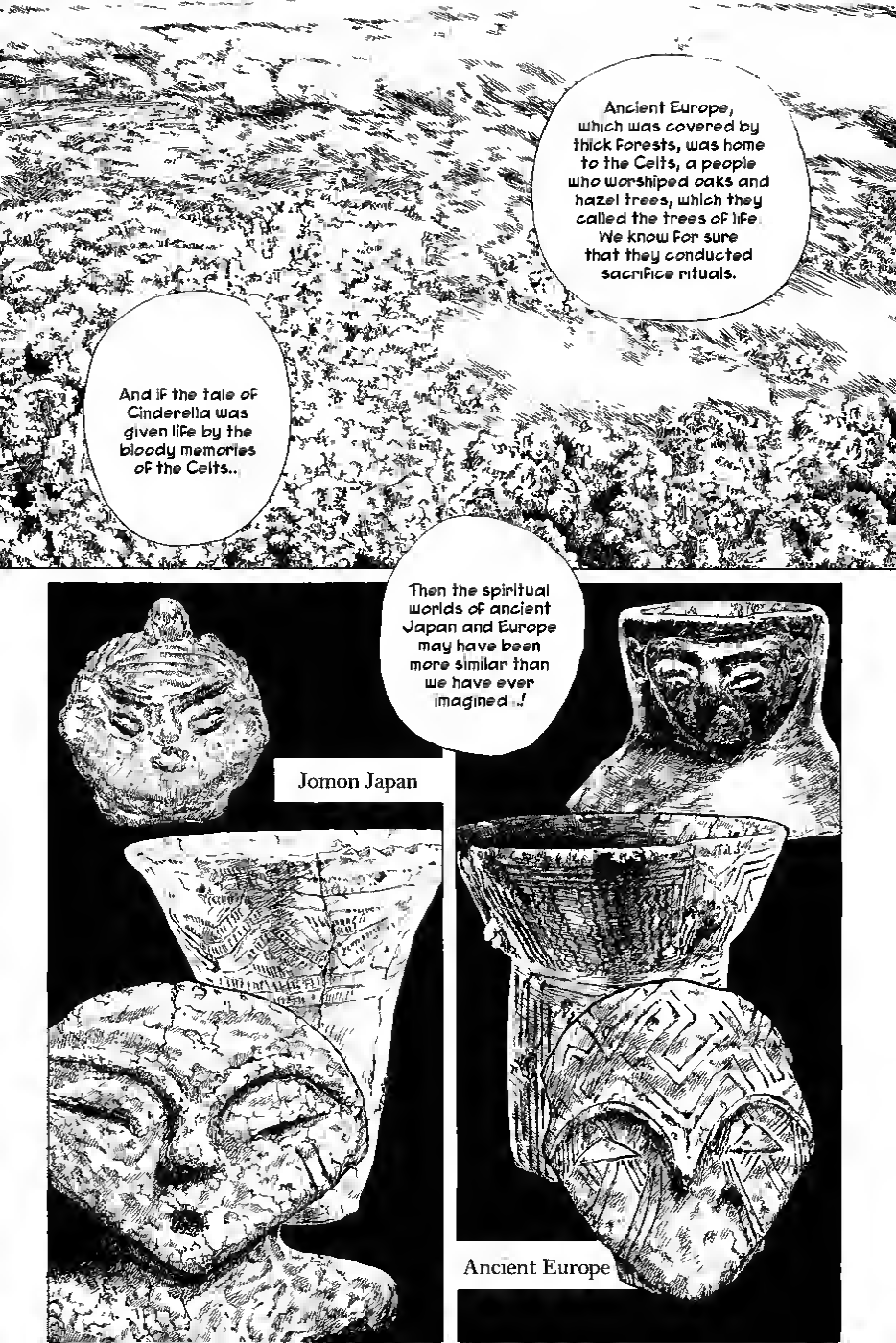
But after they forcibly wore the slipper and were on their way to the castle, the birds made a racket, and their bloody feet were discovered.


The original Grimm Fairy tale contains such bloody and violent portions.
If you compare Cinderella's sisters with the Amanojaku, you can see the similarities.


Their eyes were gouged out!?

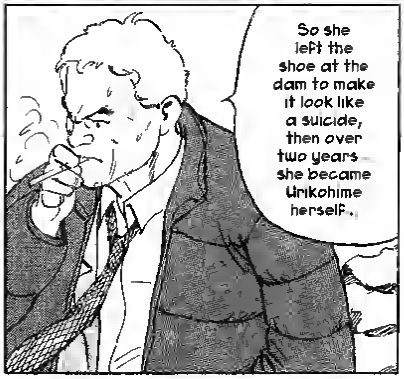

Cinderella
Stepsisters
Wear Cinderella's slipper to the prince's castle
Attacked by birds, exposed as frauds
Eyes gouged out by birds
Giant Tree
Birds
Urikohime
Amanojaku
Wears Urikohime's garment and married to rich man
Attacked by birds, exposed as a monster
Killed, cut into pieces, eyes gouged out

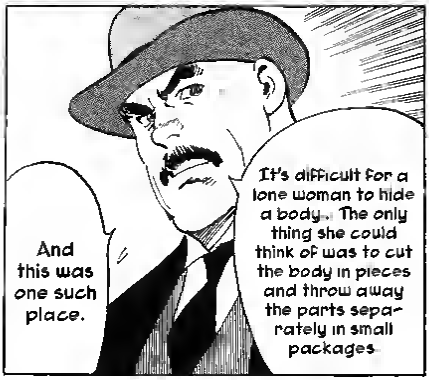
I have long since been researching the movements of culture through legends of European origins' transmission into Japan.
So we may have to also consider sacrifice rituals that are common almost worldwide!

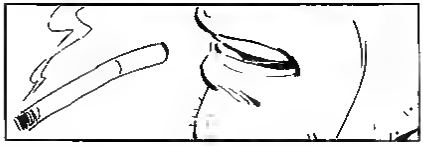

Ancient Europe, which was covered by thick forests, a people who worshiped oaks and hazel trees, which they called the trees of life. We know for sure that they conducted sacrifice rituals.
And if the tale of Cinderella was given life by the bloody memories of the Celts..
Then the spiritual worlds of ancient Japan and Europe may have been more similar than we have ever imagined..!
Jomon Japan
Ancient Europe

Alright, alright. You don't have to drive so recklessly. I'll get back to the case!
But what if that Urikohime was really the Amanojaku?
You compared Yuriko, who died in a fall, to Urikohime, didn't you?
I realized that if Cinderella and her stepsisters correspond to Urikohime and the Amanojaku, they may also overlap with Nemi Sakiko and Yuriko...!
Two years ago, Yuriko killed Sakiko!
Urikohime is really the Amanojaku ...!?

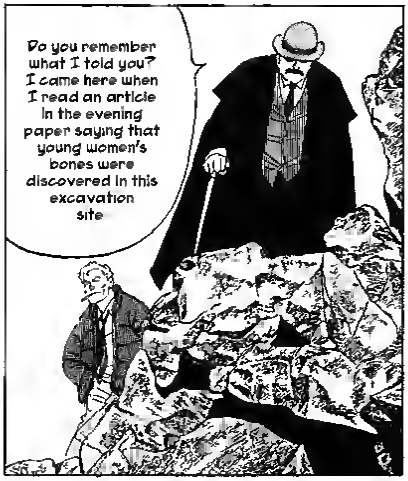
So it was Yuriko that spread those rumors! And ruined the bridal gown...!
Yuriko, too, loved Takashina Masaaki. She wanted to be the prince's bride...
Only those two stepsisters would have known what kind of relationship they had, and what they competed or fought over...
And what happened to end it all...


So she left the shoe at the dam to make it look like a suicide, then over two years she became Urikohime herself.


It's difficult for a lone woman to hide a body. The only thing she could think of was to cut the body in pieces and throw away the parts separately in small packages.
And this was one such place.

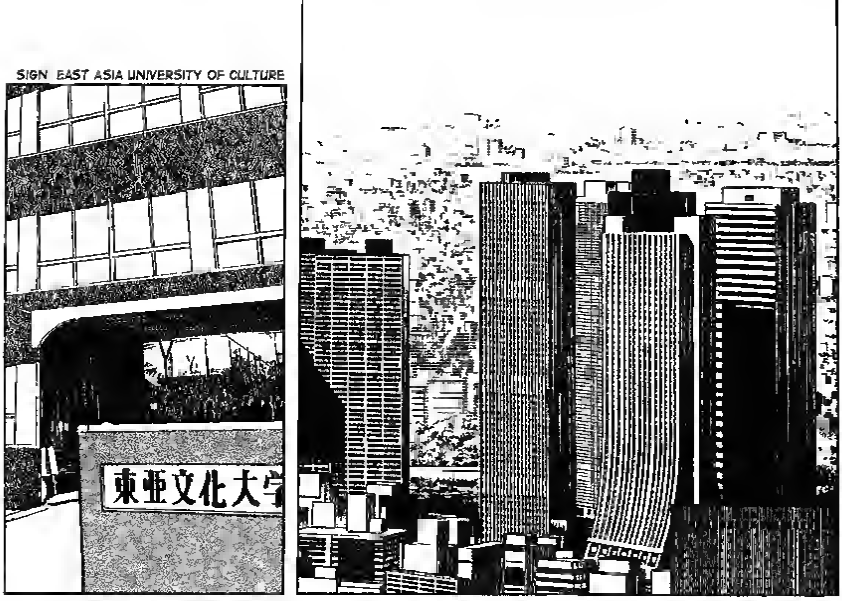


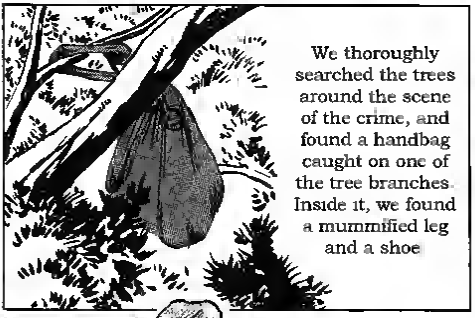
YURIKO MUST HAVE HEARD THAT NEWS, AND WAS WORRIED THAT THOSE BONES THEY HAD DISCOVERED WERE SAKIKO'S...!


Do you remember what I told you? I came here when I read an article in the evening paper saying that young women's bones were discovered in this excavation site.

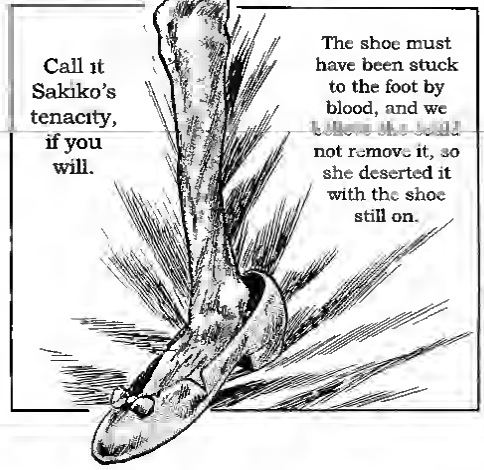
She couldn't have Sakiko's bones turn up here, after she was supposed to have thrown herself into the dam
The case would be reopened as murder, and there would be a harsh investigation
She had to make sure, and quick
And it may have been that she saw something there...
She may have seen which branch it landed on after she threw it two years ago, and she had to know whether or not it was still there
The anxiety, the fear, the forest at night, all coupled with the abnormal psychology of a criminal, made her see something...

WAAAHHH!!
AIIIEEE EEEEEE EEEEE!


SIGN EAST ASIA UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE
東亜文化大学


We thoroughly searched the trees around the scene of the crime, and found a handbag caught on one of the tree branches. Inside it, we found a mummified leg and a shoe

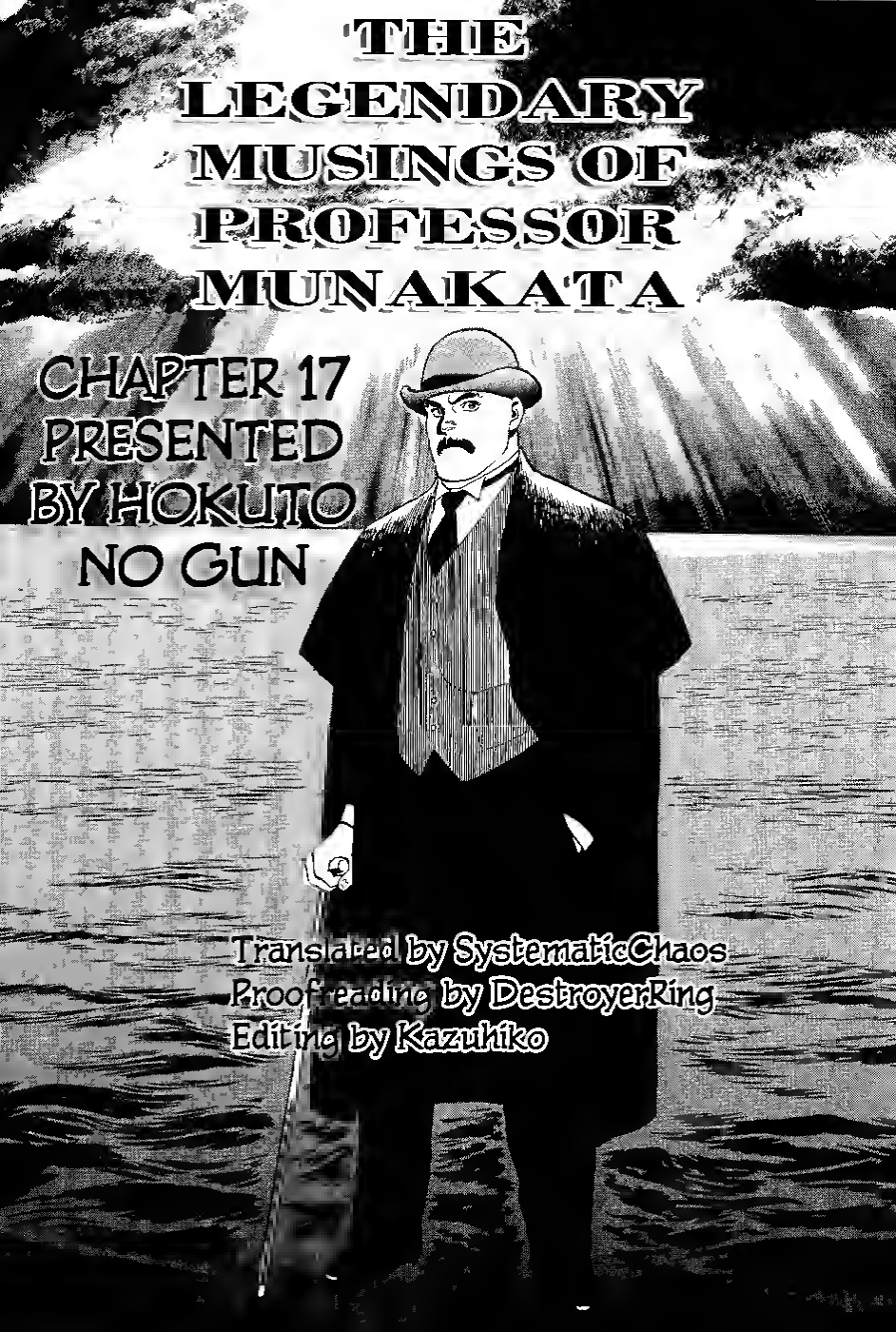
Dear Professor Munakata, I truly thank you for your great cooperation in our investigation yesterday


Call it Sakiko's tenacity, if you will.
The shoe must have been stuck to the foot by blood, and we believe she could not remove it, so she deserted it with the shoe still on.

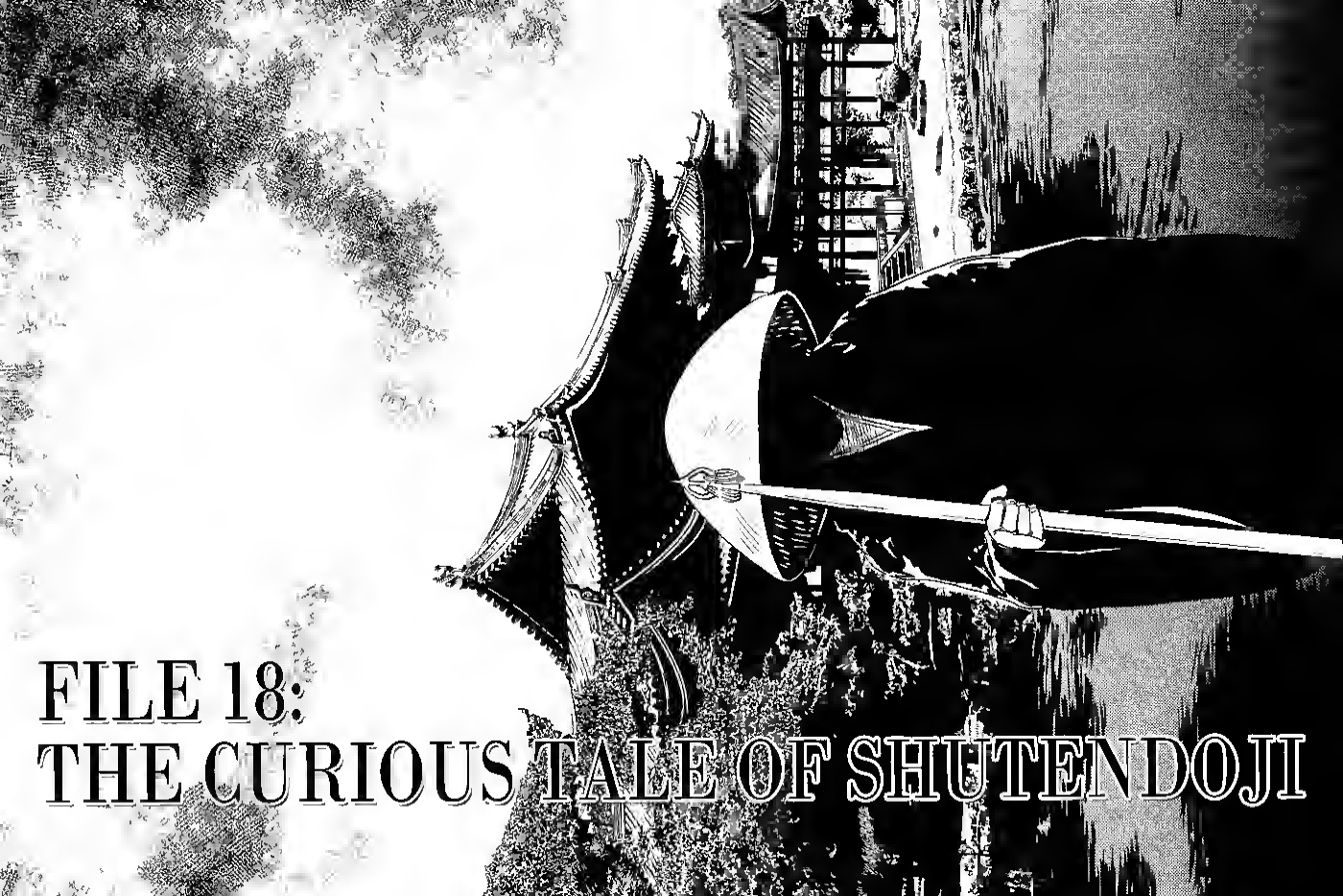
Now we can only pray that we find the rest of Sakiko's body...
Her mother Mitsue confessed that she had faintly come to realize Yuriko's crime, but she could not pursue it because she was her real daughter...
Urikohime and Amanojaku... Amanojaku and Urikohime...

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

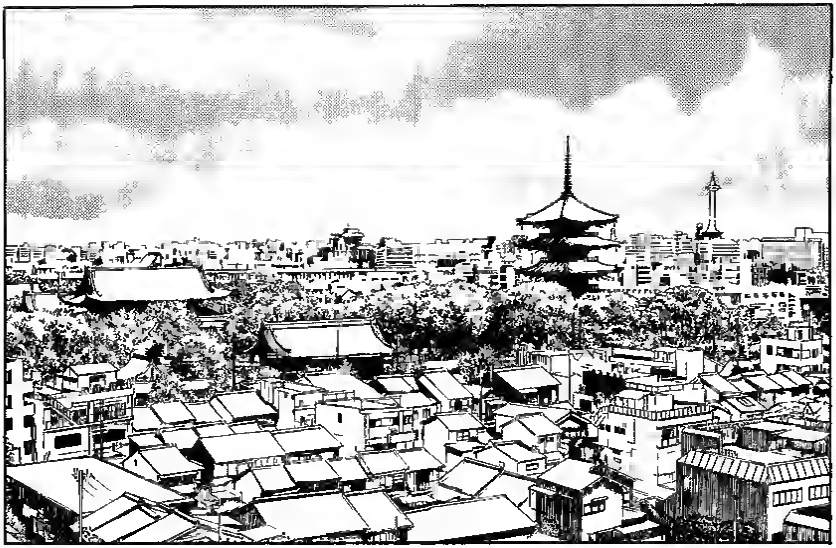
CHAPTER 17 PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

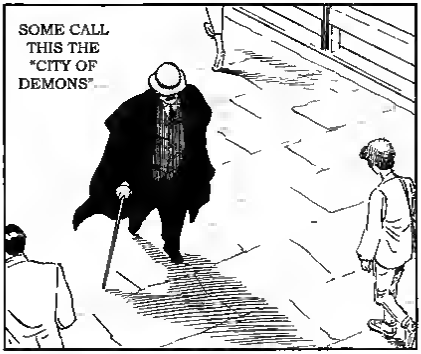


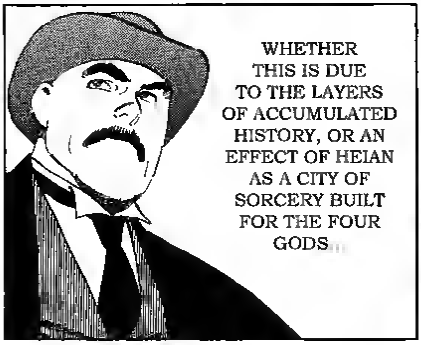
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

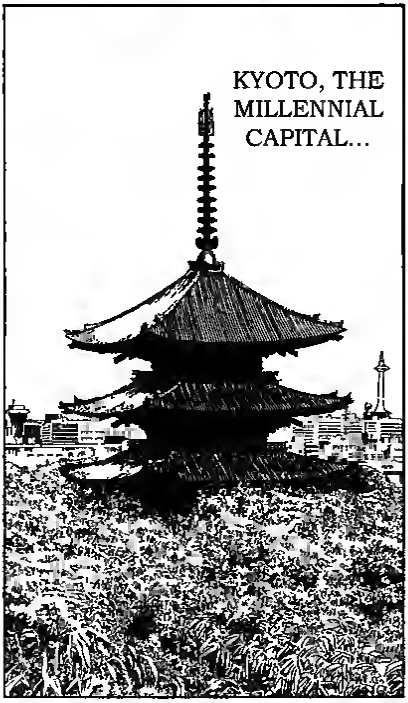


FILE 18: THE CURIOUS TALE OF SHUTENDOJI

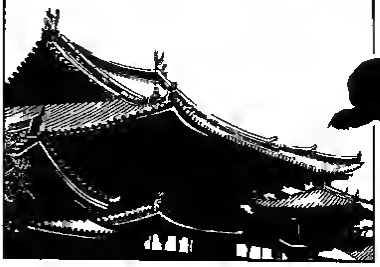



SOME CALL THIS THE "CITY OF DEMONS"...


WHETHER THIS IS DUE TO THE LAYERS OF ACCUMULATED HISTORY, OR AN EFFECT OF HEIAN AS A CITY OF SORCERY BUILT FOR THE FOUR GODS...


KYOTO, THE MILLENNIAL CAPITAL...

THIS IS SIMILAR TO WHAT IS KNOWN IN BUDDHISM AS A "BARRIER", BUT THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY WOULD RESORT TO FENG SHUI TO PROTECT THEIR CITY SHOWED HOW THEY CONSTANTLY LIVED IN FEAR OF EXTERNAL THREAT...



TANBA MOUNTAIN RAINGE

MT HIEI, ENRYAKU TEMPLE

KYOTO

OE

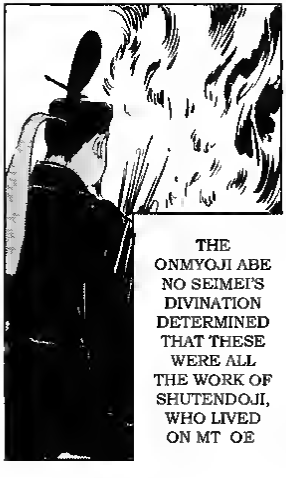
THE FOUR GODS REFERS TO THE IDEAL TOPOGRAPHY FOR BUILDING A CITY, WITH A RIVER FOR THE AZURE DRAGON IN THE EAST, A PATH FOR THE WHITE TIGER IN THE WEST, A SEA FOR THE VERMILLION BIRD IN THE SOUTH, AND A MOUNTAIN FOR THE BLACK TORTOISE IN THE NORTH

FORMER OGURA LAKE

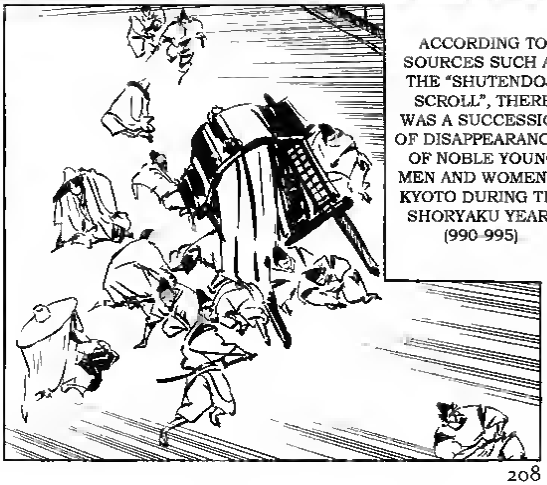
PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE MOUNTAINS TO THE NORTHEAST OF KYOTO, THE UNLUCKY DIRECTION, WAS A REALM OF EERIE AND DANGEROUS DARKNESS

IT WAS TRULY A REALM WHERE A DEMON RESIDED...

ITS NAME WAS "SHUTENDOJI", A FEARSOME KING OF DEMONS REIGNING IN THE DEMON CASTLE, WHO WOULD DRINK LIQUOR ENOUGH TO BATHE IN AND EAT HUMAN FLESH...



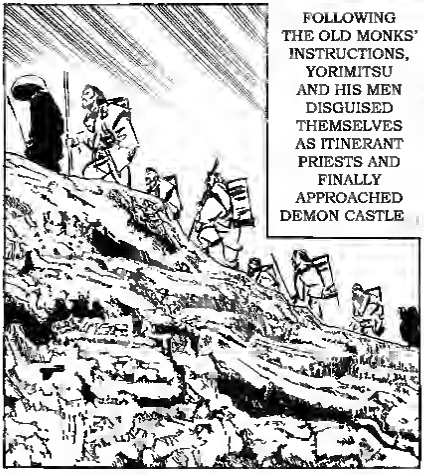
THE ONMYOJI ABE NO SEIMEI'S DIVINATION DETERMINED THAT THESE WERE ALL THE WORK OF SHUTENDOJI, WHO LIVED ON MT OE



ACCORDING TO SOURCES SUCH AS THE "SHUTENDOJI SCROLL", THERE WAS A SUCCESSION OF DISAPPEARANCES OF NOBLE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN KYOTO DURING THE SHORYAKU YEARS (990-995)

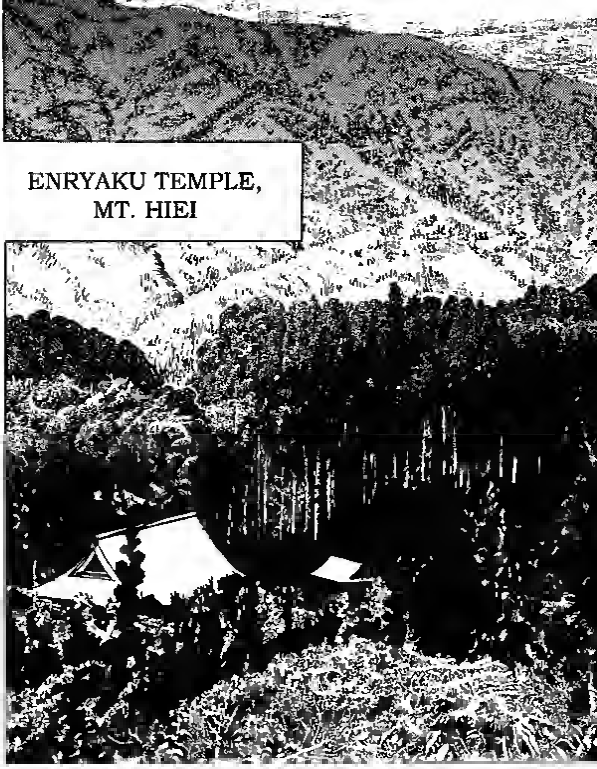
BUT AS THEY WANDERED, UNABLE TO FIND DEMON CASTLE, THEY ENCOUNTERED FOUR MYSTERIOUS MONKS

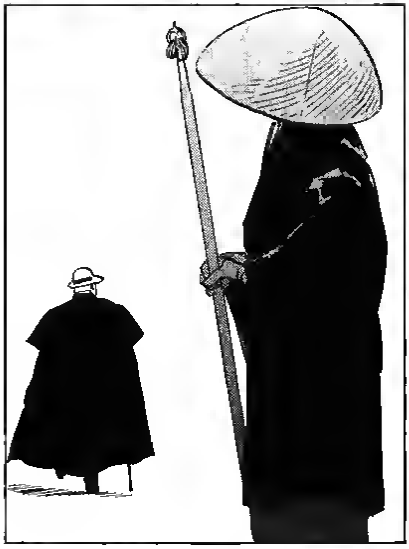
UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE CURRENT EMPEROR, EMPEROR ICHIJO, THE HERO MINAMOTO-NO-YORIMITSU (ALSO KNOWN AS RAIKO), WITH HIS FOUR HEAVENLY KINGS LED BY WATANABE-NO-TSUNA IN TOW, CLIMBED MT. OE TO DEFEAT SHUTENDOJI

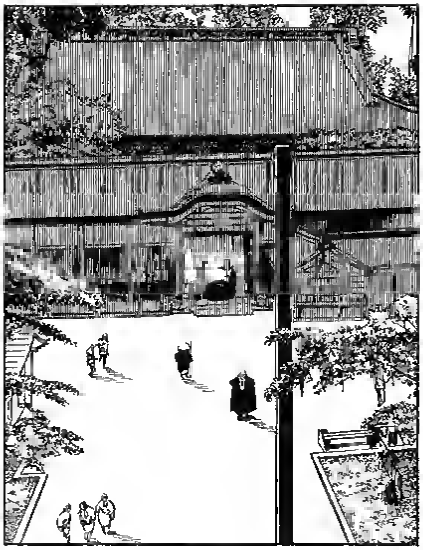


FOLLOWING THE OLD MONKS' INSTRUCTIONS, YORIMITSU AND HIS MEN DISGUISED THEMSELVES AS ITINERANT PRIESTS AND FINALLY APPROACHED DEMON CASTLE

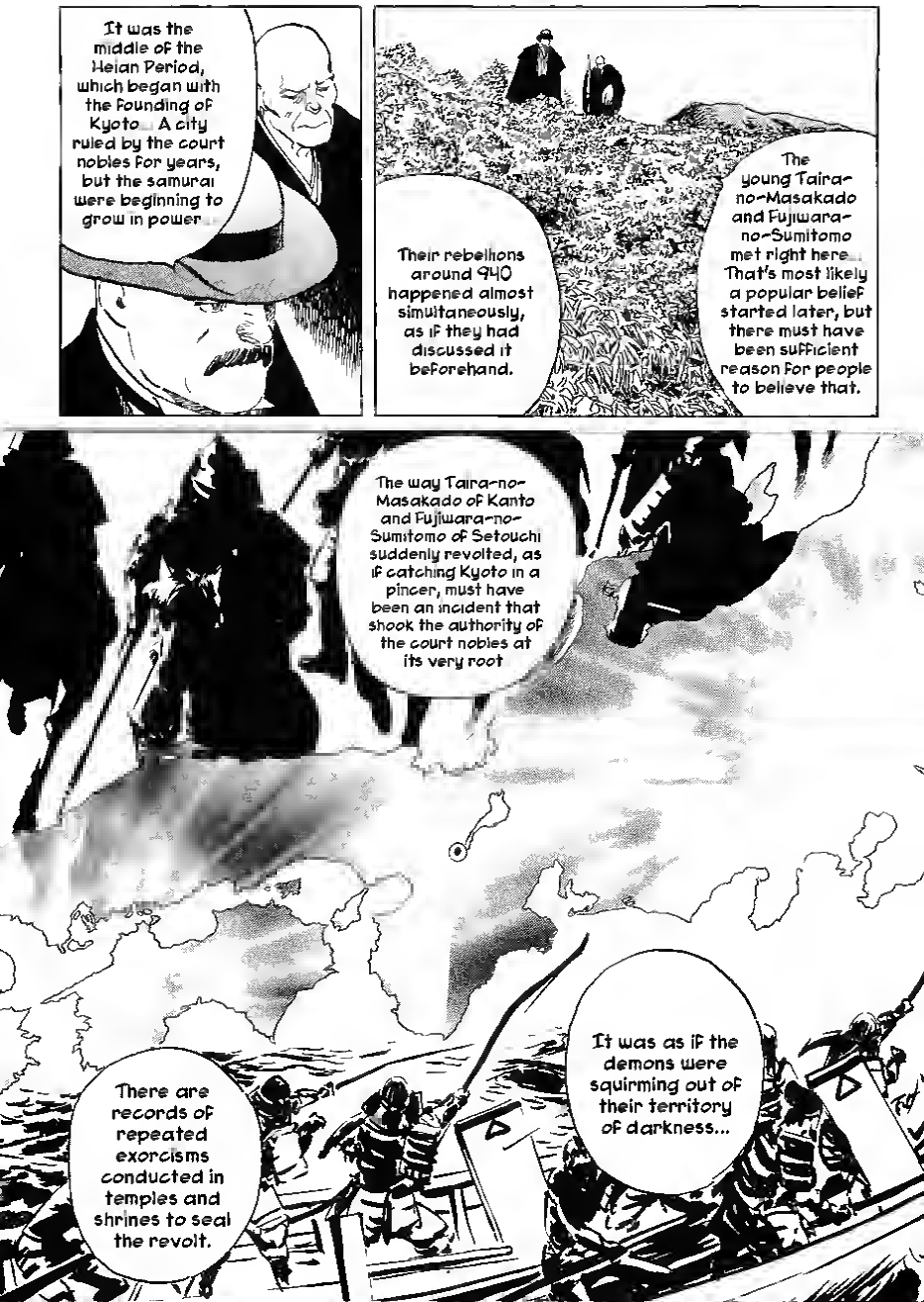
UNBEKNOWNST TO YORIMITSU, EACH OF THESE FOUR WERE GODS SUCH AS SUMIYOSHI AND HACHIMAN, WHO HAD APPEARED TO AID THEIR PARTY


ENRYAKU TEMPLE,
MT. HIEI

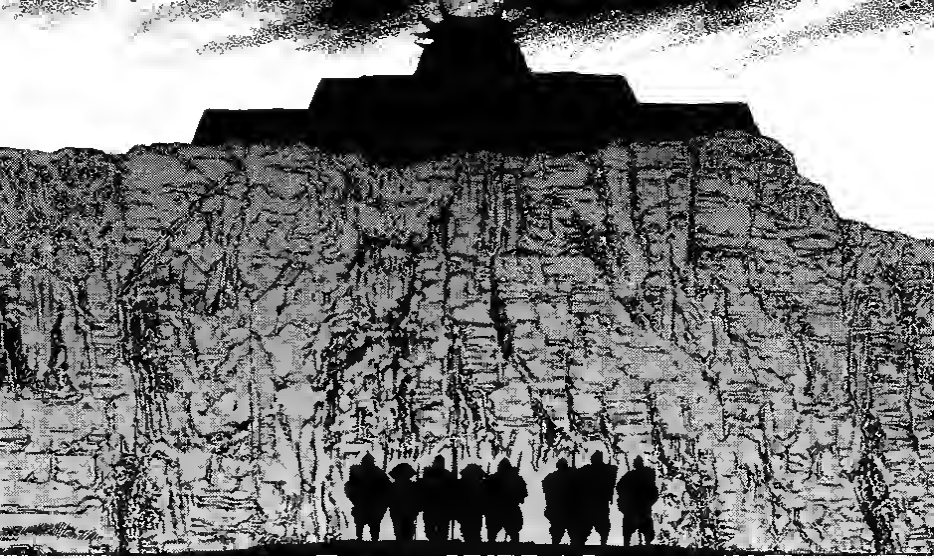




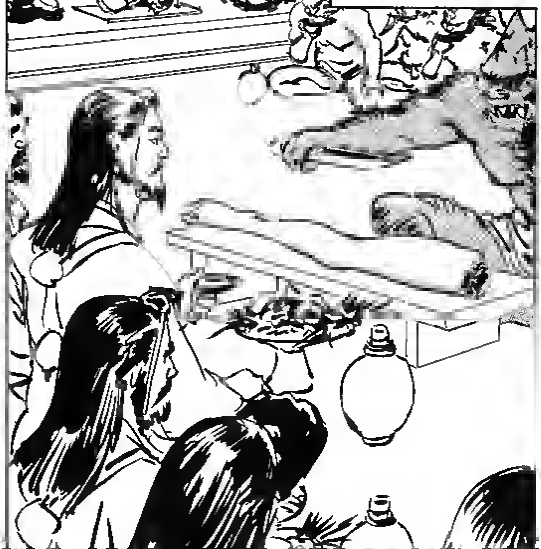
That's called Shomon Rock. It's where Taira-no-Masakado and Fujiwara-no-Sumitomo climbed Mt. Hiei to discuss their conquest over the nation.
See, look. You've got a full view of the city from here. Doesn't it seem like you could take the nation so easily...?
Hahaha! My apologies! I've just been on a pilgrimage to Nankobo.
I'm Munakata, from Tokyo. I take it you're part of the Mt. Hiei Tendai sect?


It was the middle of the Heian Period, which began with the founding of Kyoto... A city ruled by the court nobles for years, but the samurai were beginning to grow in power...
Their rebellions around 940 happened almost simultaneously, as if they had discussed it beforehand.
The young Taira-no-Masakado and Fujiwara-no-Sumitomo met right here... That's most likely a popular belief started later, but there must have been sufficient reason for people to believe that.
The way Taira-no-Masakado of Kanto and Fujiwara-no-Sumitomo of Setouchi suddenly revolted, as if catching Kyoto in a pincer, must have been an incident that shook the authority of the court nobles at its very root
There are records of repeated exorcisms conducted in temples and shrines to seal the revolt.
It was as if the demons were squirming out of their territory of darkness...

I am guessing you are here to research an ancient person... Is it Masakado?
No, I'm more interested in the legend said to happen fifty years later...
The one on "Shuten-doji".
I believe that this legend reflects the image of Masakado and Sumitomo's rebellion half a century earlier!
Shuten-doji...!?
Or more broadly, the terror of the citizens of Kyoto with the growing influence of the samurai...



BELIEVING THE LIES OF YORIMITSU'S PARTY THAT THEY DESIRED TO JOIN THEM, HE INVITED THEM TO THE DEMONS' BANQUET THAT NIGHT. THE SIDE DISH SERVED WITH THE WINE WAS A WOMAN'S LEG CUT OFF AT THE THIGH



HAVING FINALLY REACHED DEMON CASTLE, SHUTENDOJI APPEARED BEFORE MINAMOTO NO YORIMITSU IN NONE OTHER THAN THE FORM OF A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN.

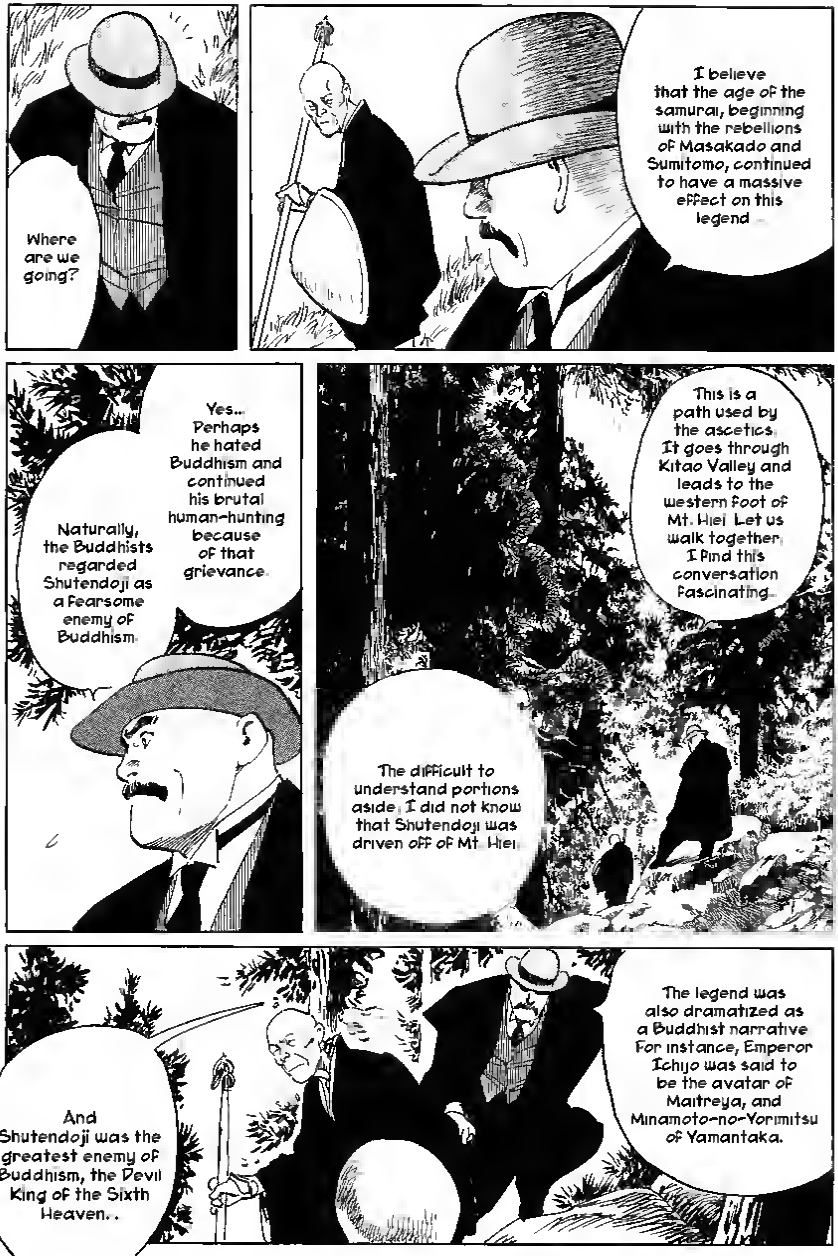
HE ORIGINALLY LIVED ON MT. HIEI, BUT COULD REMAIN NO LONGER BECAUSE OF THE GREAT MONK SAICHO FOUNDING ENRYAKU TEMPLE, SO HE MOVED TO MT. OE, WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO AGITATE THE NATION
THE DRUNK SHUTENDOJI BEGAN TO TELL HIS OWN PERSONAL HISTORY

YORIMITSU AND HIS MEN WAITED FOR MIDNIGHT, THEN DONNED THEIR ARMOR AND BEGAN SEARCHING THE CASTLE TO BREAK INTO SHUTENDOJI'S SLEEPING QUARTERS

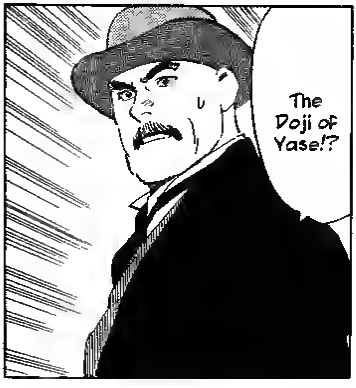
WHAT THEY SAW HERE AND THERE THROUGHOUT THE CASTLE WERE THE PITIFUL REMAINS OF THE YOUNG WOMEN TAKEN AWAY FROM THE CITY

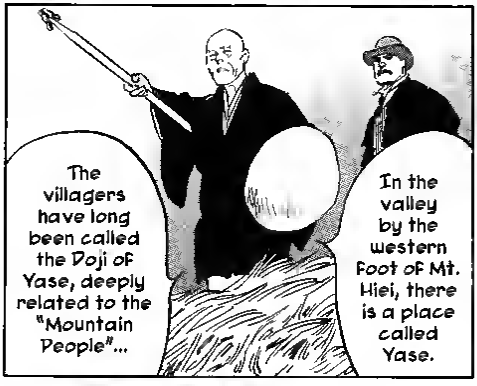
The tenth century was an age of uproars for Heian, what with the frequent plagues and earthquakes.

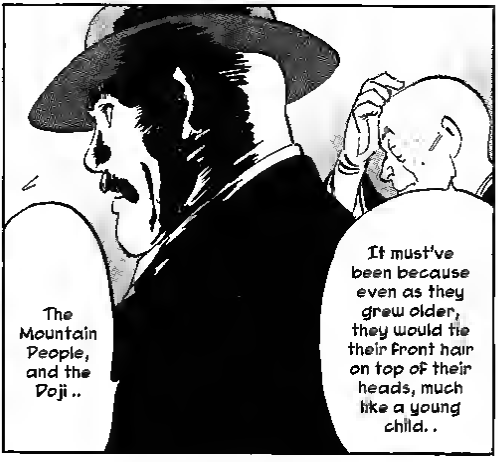
Since Shutendoji was said to have appeared at around the same time, this gives credence to the theory that he was a "God of Pestilence", or an evil god that spreads plagues. However...
In the 990s, the city was beleaguered by a smallpox epidemic they called the "Great Pestilence of the Nation", and the dead bodies of the residents were scattered all over.

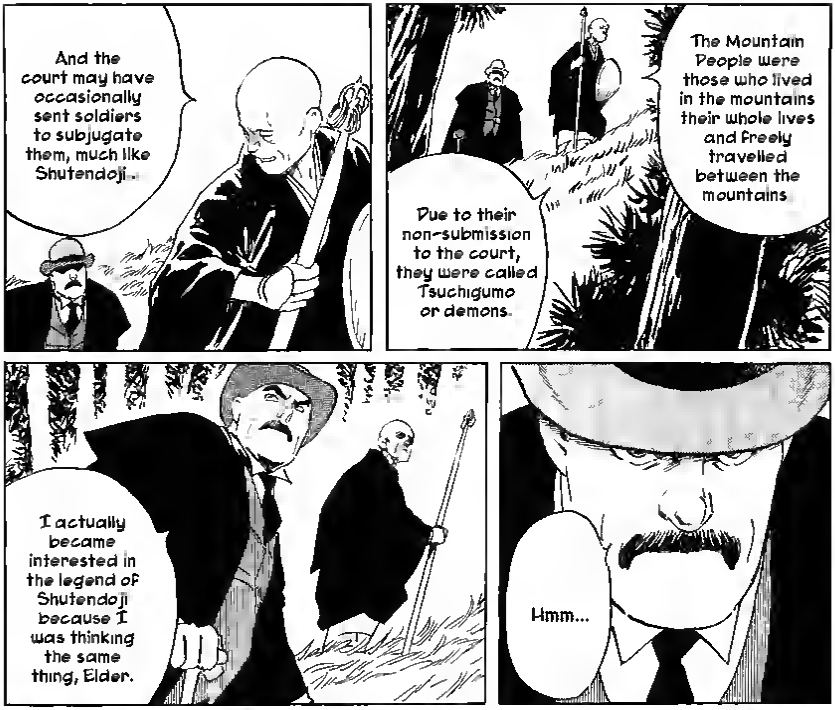

Where are we going?
I believe that the age of the samurai, beginning with the rebellions of Masakado and Sumitomo, continued to have a massive effect on this legend.
Yes... Perhaps he hated Buddhism and continued his brutal human-hunting because of that grievance.
Naturally, the Buddhists regarded Shutendoji as a fearsome enemy of Buddhism.
This is a path used by the ascetics. It goes through Kitao Valley and leads to the western foot of Mt. Hiei. Let us walk together. I find this conversation fascinating.
The difficult to understand portions aside, I did not know that Shutendoji was driven off of Mt. Hiei.
The legend was also dramatized as a Buddhist narrative. For instance, Emperor Ichijo was said to be the avatar of Maitreya, and Minamoto-no-Yorimitsu of Yamantaka.
And Shutendoji was the greatest enemy of Buddhism, the Devil King of the Sixth Heaven..

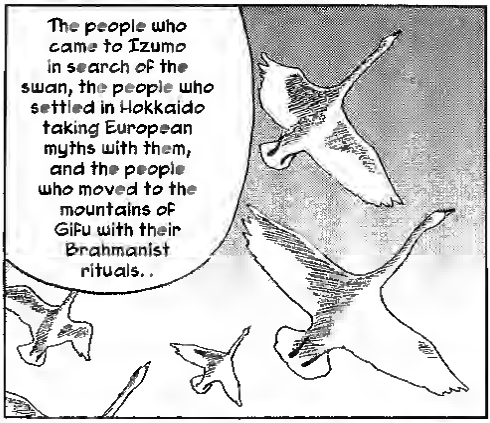
The Devil King of the Sixth Heaven...
No...
Is it something the matter?


The Doji of Yase!?

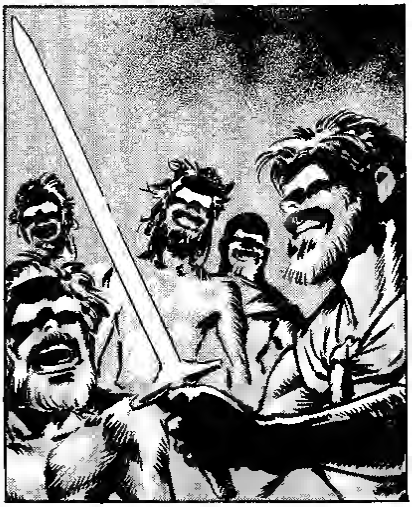

The villagers have long been called the Doji of Yase, deeply related to the "Mountain People"...
In the valley by the western foot of Mt. Hiei, there is a place called Yase.


The Mountain People, and the Doji ..
It must've been because even as they grew older, they would tie their front hair on top of their heads, much like a young child. .

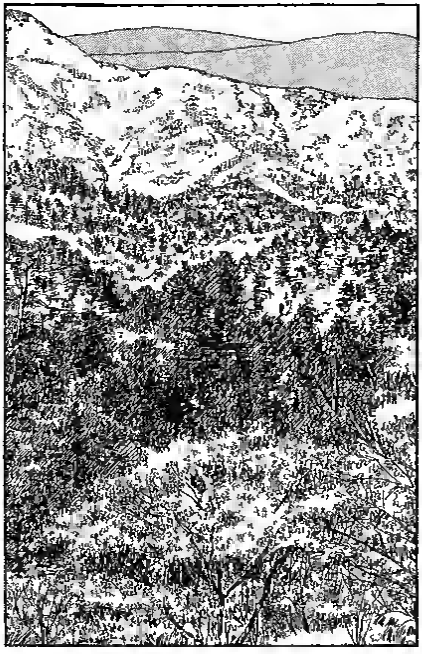

And the court may have occasionally sent soldiers to subjugate them, much like Shutendoji.
The Mountain People were those who lived in the mountains their whole lives and freely travelled between the mountains.
Due to their non-submission to the court, they were called Tsuchigumo or demons.
I actually became interested in the legend of Shutendoji because I was thinking the same thing, Elder.
Hmm...

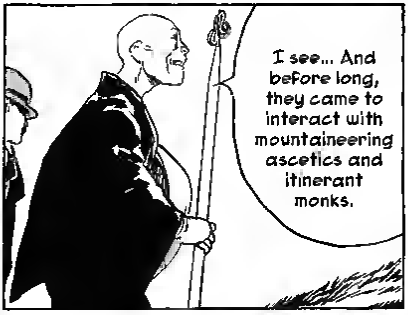

The people who came to Izumo in search of the swan, the people who settled in Hokkaido taking European myths with them, and the people who moved to the mountains of Gifu with their Brahmanist rituals..

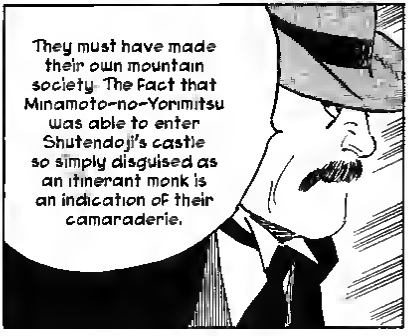
I have long since been interested in settlers coming to ancient Japan in search of iron ore.



They endlessly moved from mount to mount as they dug up iron ore... Sometimes they were called the Mountain People, and sometimes the Mountain Nomads



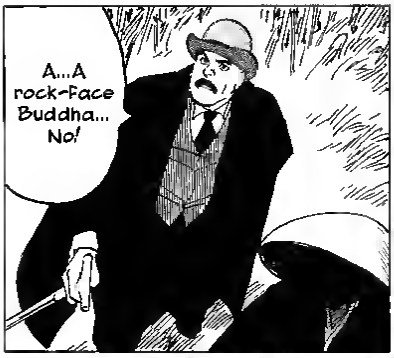

I see... And before long, they came to interact with mountaineering ascetics and itinerant monks.

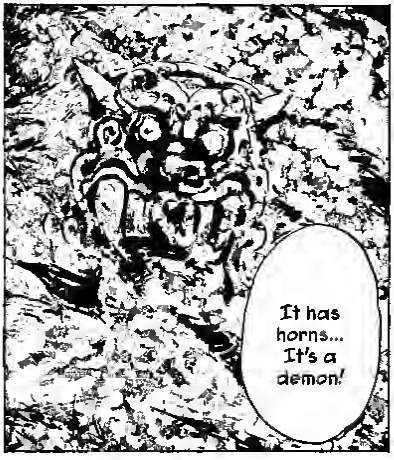

They must have made their own mountain society. The fact that Minamoto-no-Yorimitsu was able to enter Shutendoji's castle so simply disguised as an itinerant monk is an indication of their camaraderie.

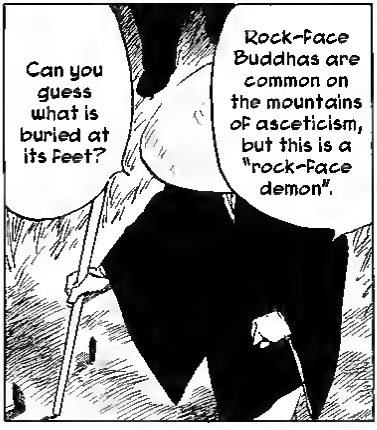
I'd like to return to the plains now. I think I'd better go...
Climb to the north from here, and you will reach Mt. Kurama, famous for its Tengu. Go straight and you will reach Mt. Atago, said to have been opened by En-no-Ozunu.
This path leading from Mt. Hiei may have been such a path of darkness.
I have something I would like to show you, Munakata.
If you follow me, you will return to Kyoto by sundown... How about it?
And how will you return on this hidden path? You will be lost for two or three days in the mountains.
Hohhohho! We must hurry. The mountains are terrifying at night...
.....

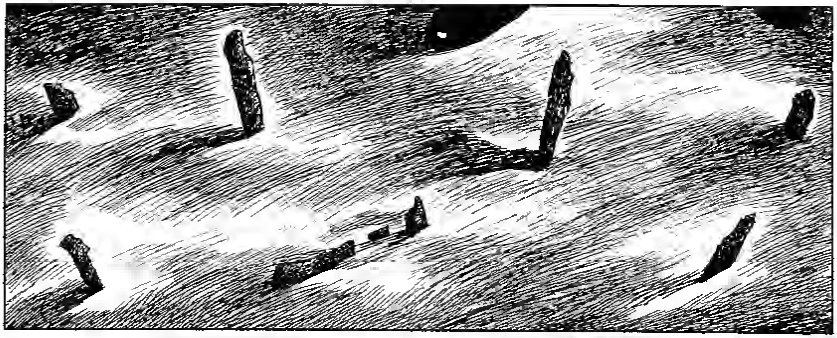
ヒョイ
ヒョイ
Please, Elder! Won't you go a little slower...!?
W...Why did this have to happen, For crying out loud!?
Damn!

Hoh hoh ho...
This is what I wanted to show you.
Hoh hoh ho!
Now do you understand the toils of the Mountain People and the ascetics, Munakata?


A...A rock-face Buddha... No!

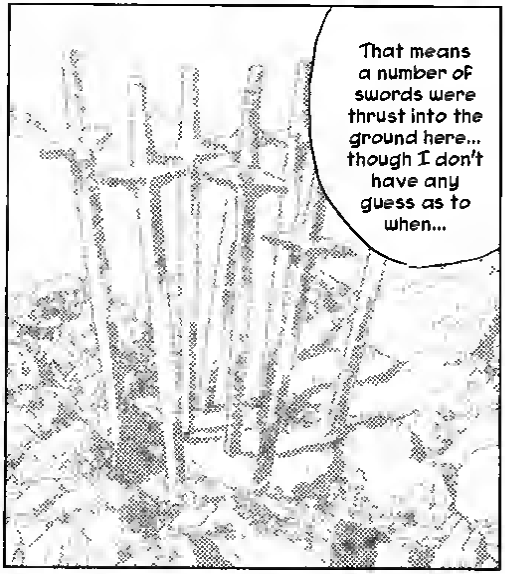

It has horns... It's a demon!

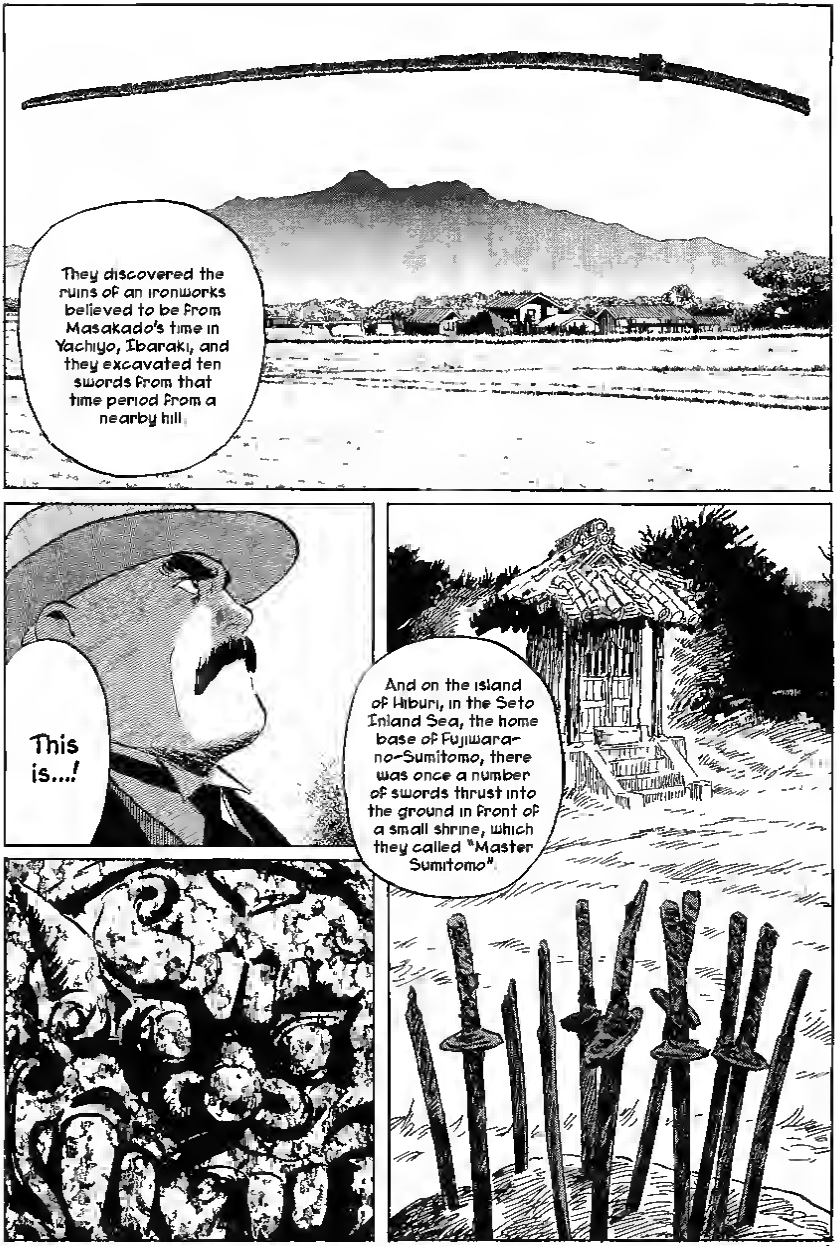

Can you guess what is buried at its feet?
Rock-face Buddhas are common on the mountains of asceticism, but this is a "rock-face demon".



They're probably the points of iron swords...!

I remember now!
They found swords like these in Taira-no-Masakado's domain, as well as Fujiwara-no-Sumitomo's..!

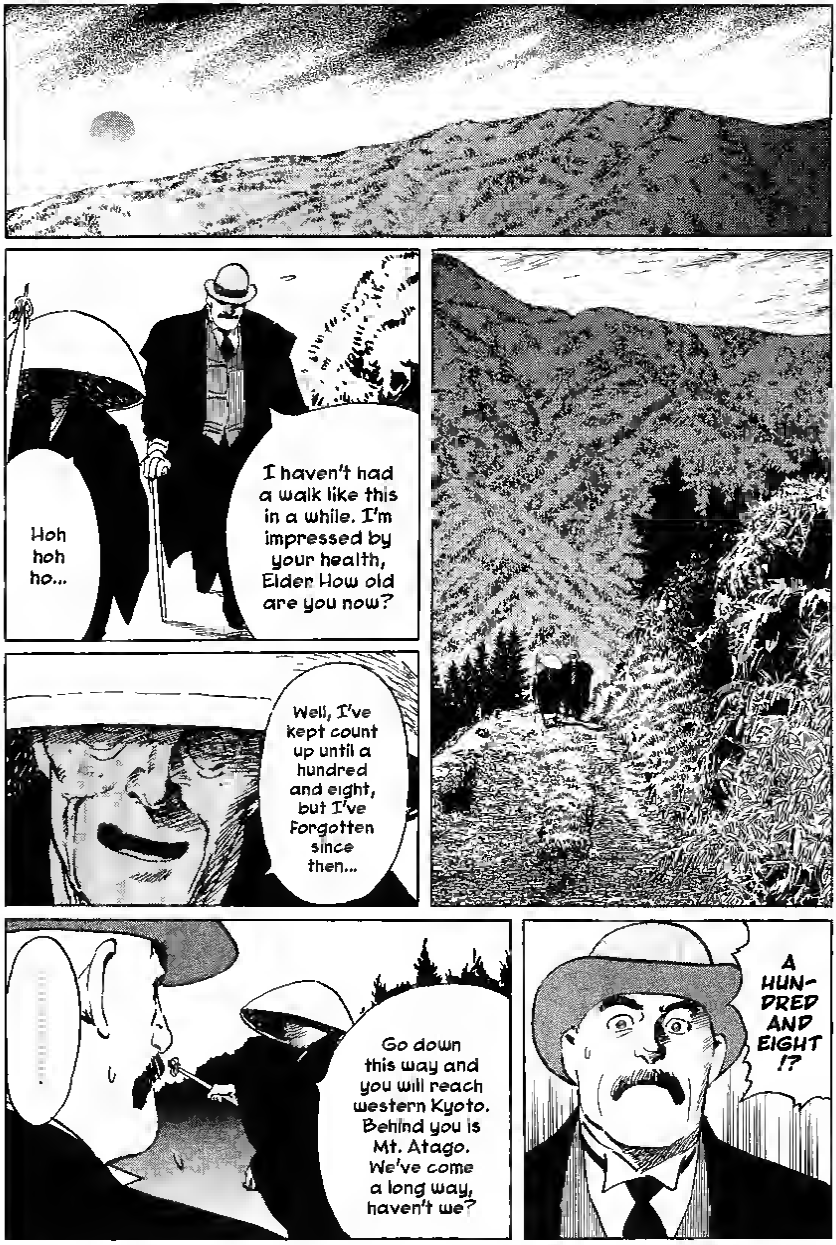

That means a number of swords were thrust into the ground here... though I don't have any guess as to when...

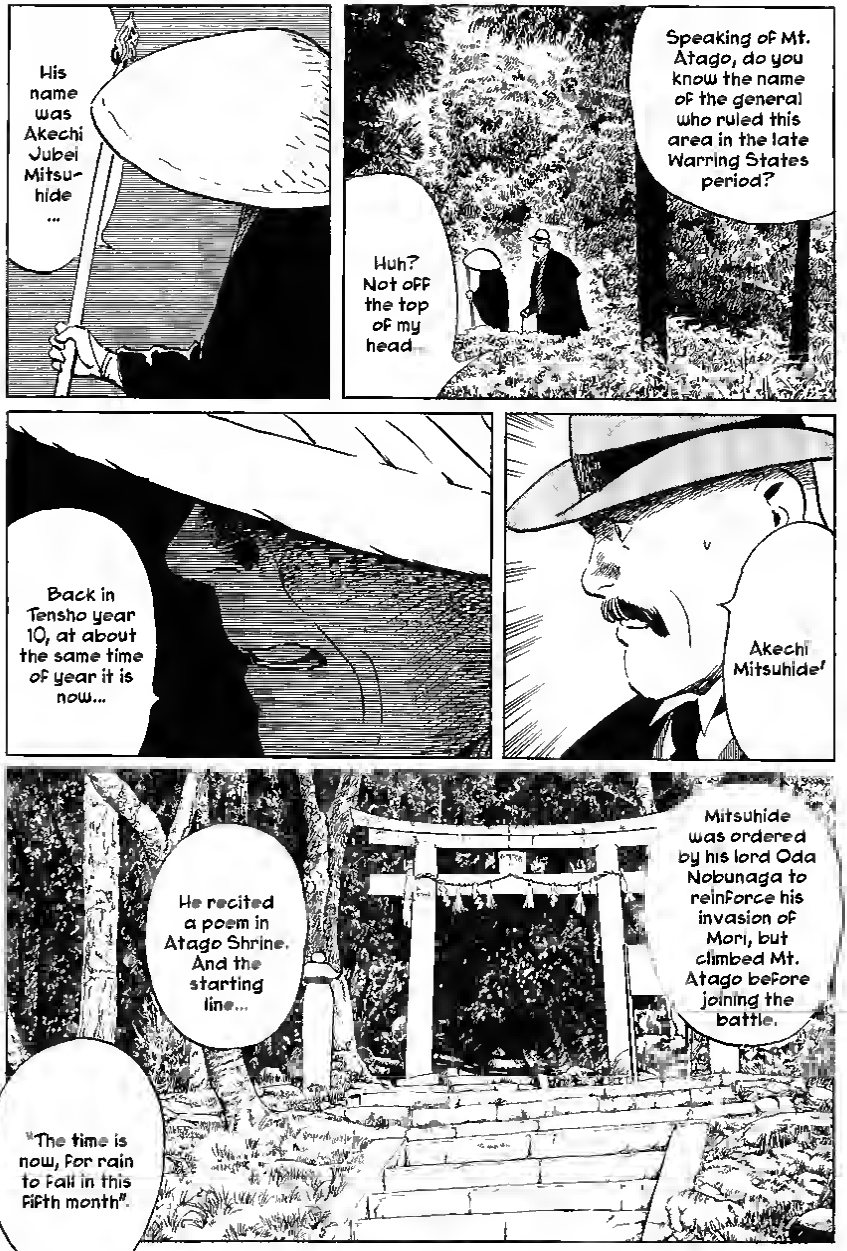

They discovered the ruins of an ironworks believed to be from Masakado's time in Yachiyo, Ibaraki, and they excavated ten swords from that time period from a nearby hill.
This is...!
And on the island of Hiburi, in the Seto Inland Sea, the home base of Fujiwara-no-Sumitomo, there was once a number of swords thrust into the ground in front of a small shrine, which they called "Master Sumitomo".

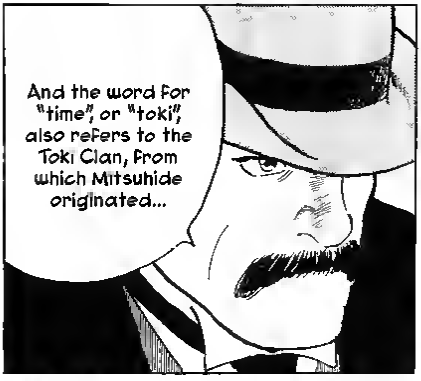
So the mountain people's network cooperated with Masakado and Sumitomo, and allowed their rebellions to happen simultaneously!
You are right, Munakata. This is proof that the iron-mining mountain people were in contact with the East and the West...
And as they continued their rebellion against the court and the nobles' authority, they gambled on the might of the samurai!
Only the samurai could defeat the samurai!
In the end, the rebellions were quelled not by the power of the nobles, nor by magic, but by a fellow samurai named Fujiwara-no-Hidesato, who took their heads by military force.

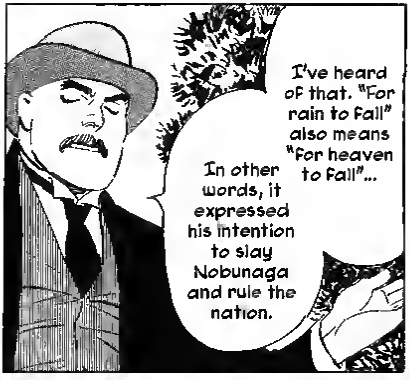
The samurai even gained the power of the "vengeful spirit", and the nobles feared them more and more.
This may have been a rumor that the Mountain People spread in different regions.
There was a bizarre legend that the head of Taira-no-Masakado, which was gibbeted in Kyoto, flew back to Kanto as if mocking the nobles.
The riots of the samurai would continue to grow on a massive scale, and each time their power would become greater.
And finally the Heian period ended, and the samurai government was born.

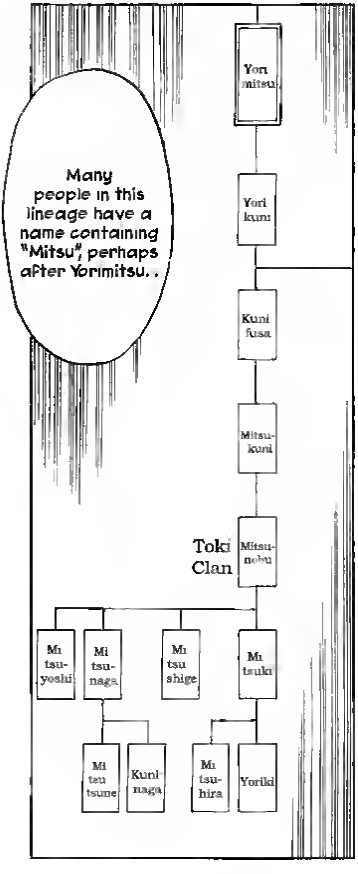
I believe that Shutendoji was originally a tale of a lesser demon, but gradually he became a massive king of demons, and Yorimitsu and his men were made more powerful along with him.
I think the legend was completed in its current form after the coming of the age of the samurai, during the Kamakura and Muromachi periods.
AND IT MAY HAVE EVEN BEEN A PREMONITION OF THE COMING AGE OF WARRING STATES.
DEMON VS. SAMURAI. VIOLENCE VS. VIOLENCE. THE RAMPANT BATTLE BETWEEN THOSE WHO HAD ABANDONED THE RULE OF THE COURT NOBLES CONTINUED TO ESCALATE...

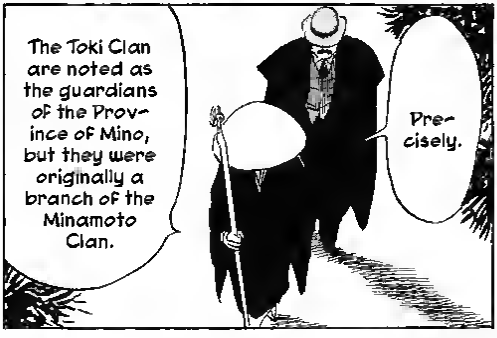

Hoh hoh ho...
I haven't had a walk like this in a while. I'm impressed by your health, Elder How old are you now?
Well, I've kept count up until a hundred and eight, but I've forgotten since then...
Go down this way and you will reach western Kyoto. Behind you is Mt. Atago. We've come a long way, haven't we?
A HUN-DRED AND EIGHT !?

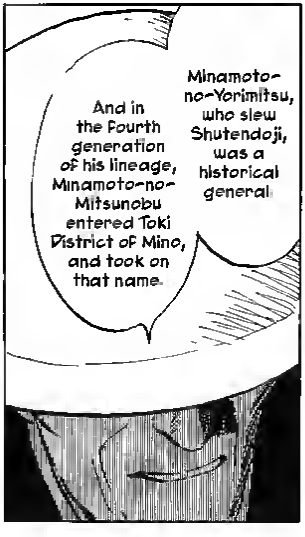

His name was Akechi Jubei Mitsuhide ...
Huh? Not off the top of my head...
Speaking of Mt. Atago, do you know the name of the general who ruled this area in the late Warring States period?
Back in Tensho year 10, at about the same time of year it is now...
Akechi Mitsuhide!
"The time is now, For rain to Fall in this Fifth month".
He recited a poem in Atago Shrine. And the starting line...
Mitsuhide was ordered by his lord Oda Nobunaga to reinforce his invasion of Mori, but climbed Mt. Atago before joining the battle.


And the word for "time", or "toki", also refers to the Toki Clan, from which Mitsuhide originated...


I've heard of that. "For rain to fall" also means "for heaven to fall"...
In other words, it expressed his intention to slay Nobunaga and rule the nation.


Many people in this lineage have a name containing "Mitsu", perhaps after Yorimitsu. .
Yori mitsu
Yori kuni
Kuni fusa
Mitsu kuni
Toki Clan
Mitsu nobu
Mi tsu yoshi
Mi tsu naga
Mi tsu shige
Mi tsuki
Mi tsu tsune
Kuni naga
Mi tsu hira
Yoriki

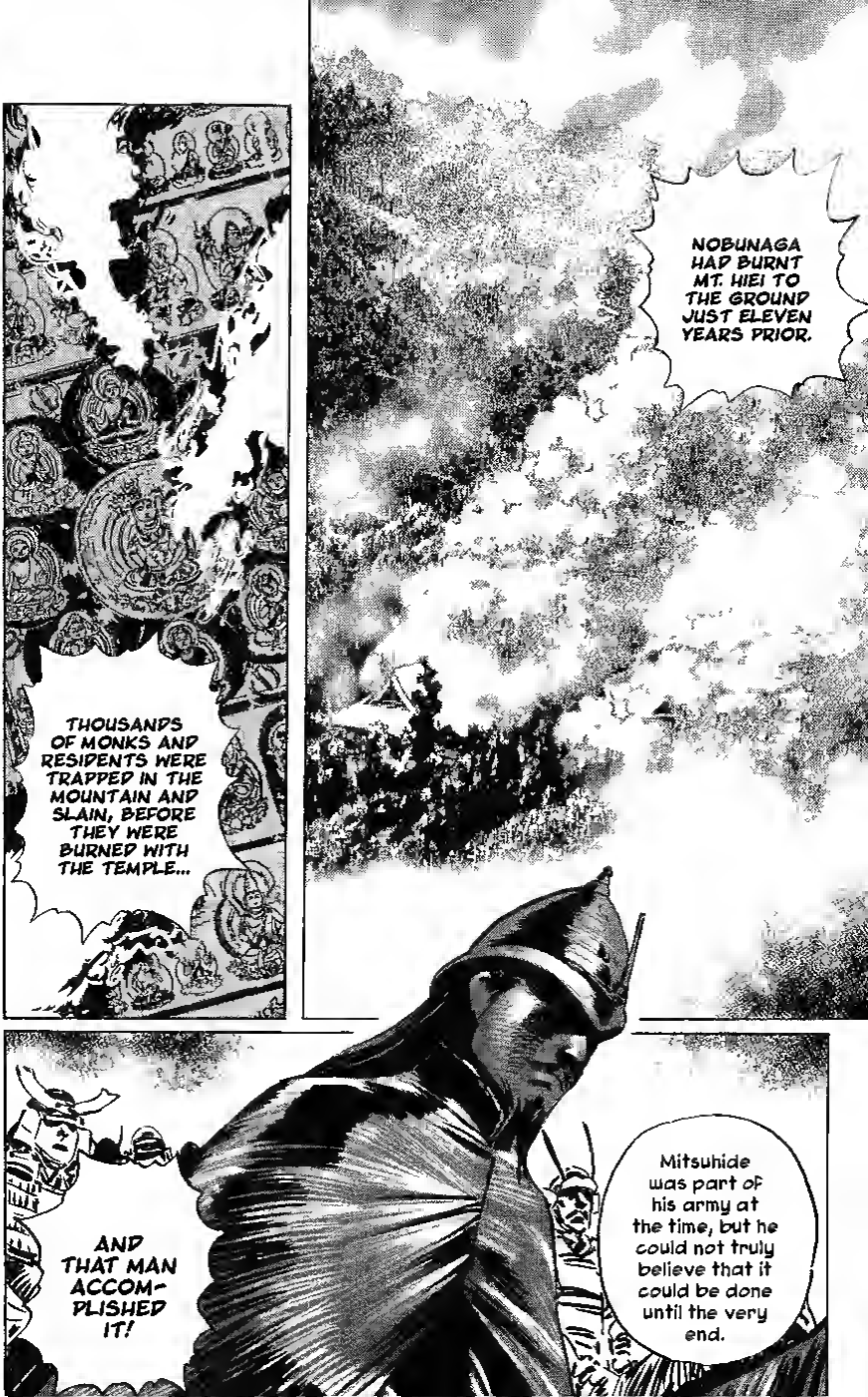

The Toki Clan are noted as the guardians of the Province of Mino, but they were originally a branch of the Minamoto Clan.
Precisely.


Minamoto-no-Yorimitsu, who slew Shutendoji, was a historical general.
And in the Fourth generation of his lineage, Minamoto-no-Mitsunobu entered Toki District of Mino, and took on that name.

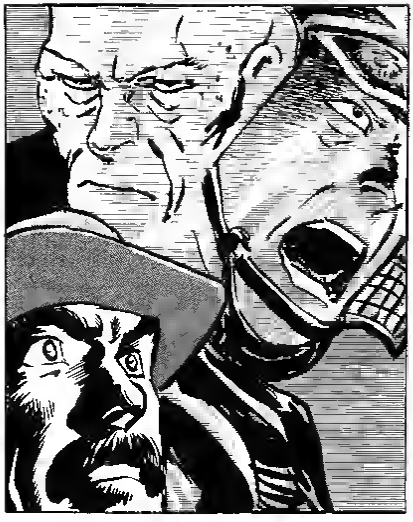
The Minamoto Clan?

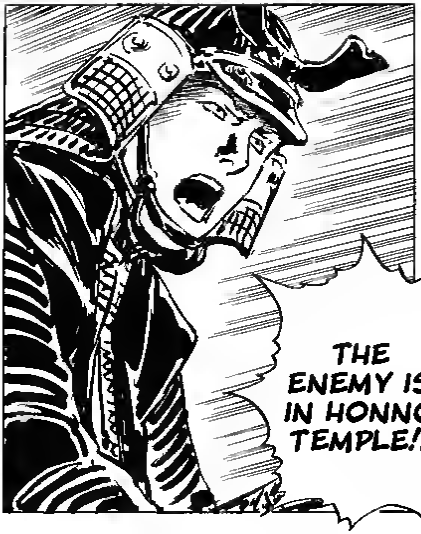
SO AKECHI MITSUHIDE WAS A DESCENDANT OF MINAMOTO-NO-YORIMITSU ...!?
"MITSU"-HIDE!
HAVING DESCENDED FROM MT. ATAGO, MITSUHIDE READIED HIS ARMY, MARCHED FORTH FROM KAMEI CASTLE, AND HEADED FOR OI HILL. IT WAS DAWN ON JUNE 2ND...
But at the very least, Mitsuhide himself must have believed that.
With the chaotic family tree of the Warring States, no one can know for sure...
OI HILL IS SAID TO BE A CORRUPTION OF THE ANCIENT NAME OF OE.
THAT WAS THE MT. OE OF SHUTENDOJI... WITH KYOTO IMMEDIATELY BELOW IT!

MEANWHILE, ODA NOBUNAGA WAS SLUMBERING IN HONNO TEMPLE IN KYOTO, WITH JUST A SMALL ENTOURAGE!
BUT ONE VOICE RESOUNDING WITHIN MITSUHIDE'S HEART SPURRED HIM ON...
"I AM MINAMOTO-NO-YORIMITSU!"
HE MUST HAVE EVEN HAD FEELINGS OF HESITATION AS WELL.
MITSUNARI'S MIND WAS SWIRLING WITH ALL SORTS OF FEELINGS. HIS HATRED FOR HIS LORD, HIS AMBITION FOR THE NATION...
"AND NOBUNAGA IS MY FATAL FOE, SHUTENDOJI!"

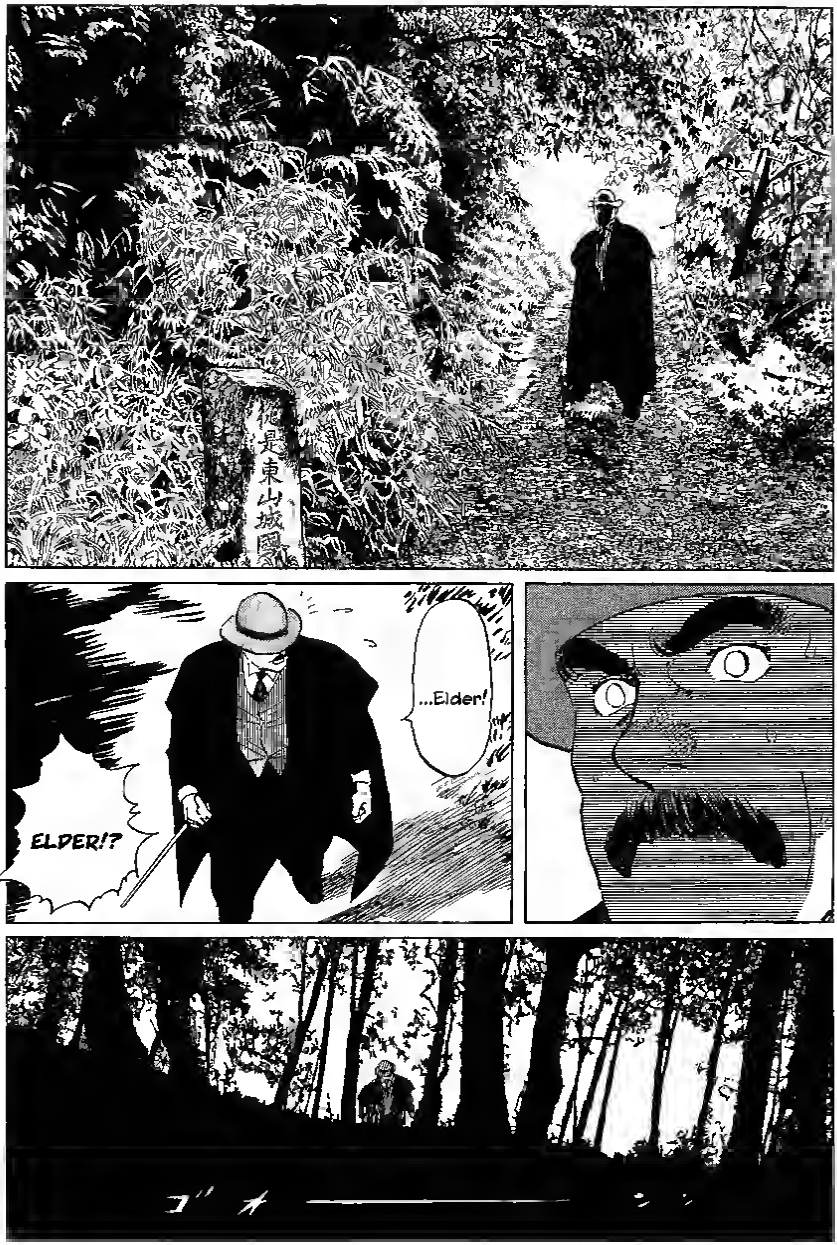

NOBUNAGA HAD BURNT MT. HIEI TO THE GROUND JUST ELEVEN YEARS PRIOR.
THOUSANDS OF MONKS AND RESIDENTS WERE TRAPPED IN THE MOUNTAIN AND SLAIN, BEFORE THEY WERE BURNED WITH THE TEMPLE...
Mitsuhide was part of his army at the time, but he could not truly believe that it could be done until the very end.
AND THAT MAN ACCOM-PLISHED IT!

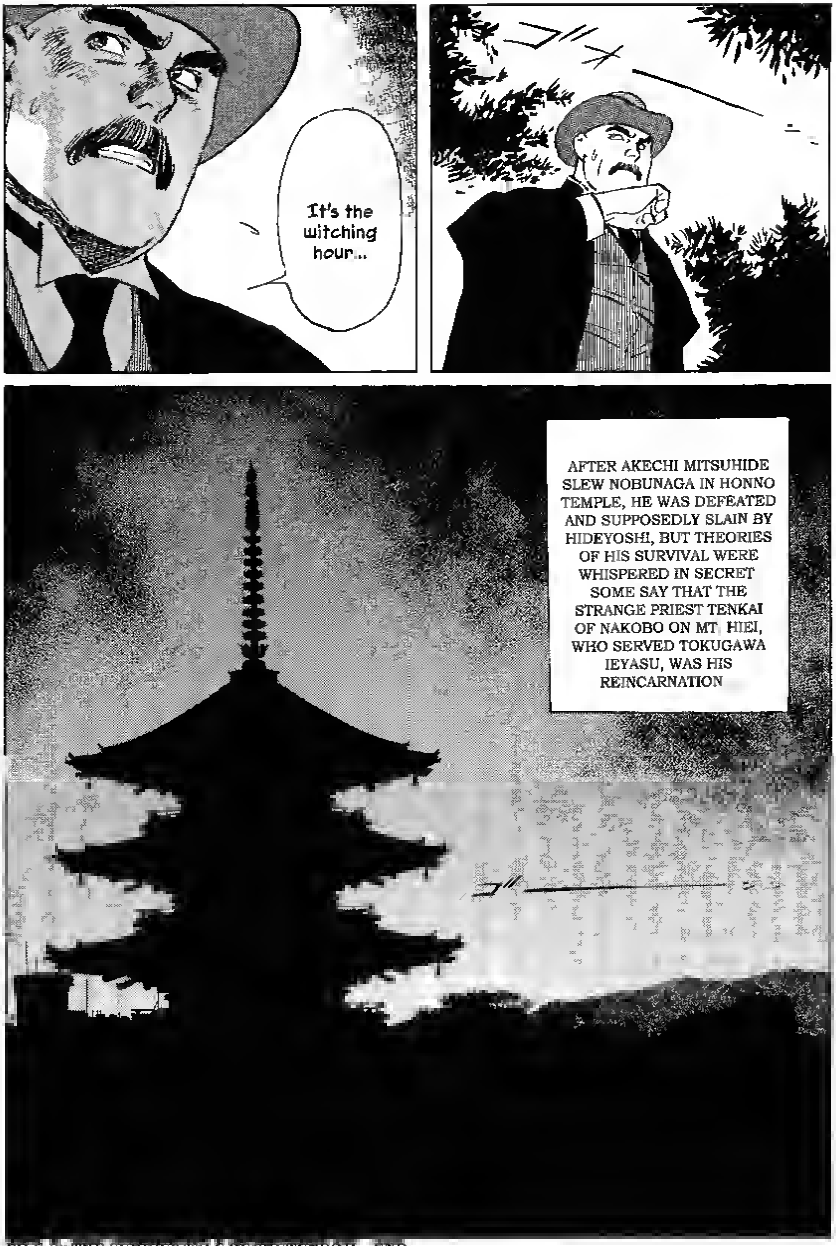
THE DEMON KING OF THE SIXTH HEAVEN!!
AND AS IF MOCKING THE REPROACH OF THE PEOPLE, HE CALLED HIMSELF...
THAT MONSTER NEEDED TO BE DESTROYED BEFORE HE LAID CLAIM TO THE NATION!!
NOBUNAGA HIMSELF WAS THE CULMINATION OF THE SAMURAI WHICH HAD GROWN TO THE POINT WHERE HE TREAD ON HUMAN LIVES AND FEARED NO GOD.




THE ENEMY IS IN HONNO TEMPLE!!

THE ENEMY IS IN HONNO TEMPLE!!
SHUTENDOJI HAD REVEALED HIS TRUE FORM, AND WAS SLEEPING IN THE FORM OF A FEARSOME DEMON AND MINAMOTO-NO-YORIMITSU AND HIS MEN FELL UPON HIM!


...Elder!
ELDER!?


It's the witching hour...
AFTER AKECHI MITSUHIDE SLEW NOBUNAGA IN HONNO TEMPLE, HE WAS DEFEATED AND SUPPOSEDLY SLAIN BY HIDEYOSHI, BUT THEORIES OF HIS SURVIVAL WERE WHISPERED IN SECRET SOME SAY THAT THE STRANGE PRIEST TENKAI OF NAKOBO ON MT. HIEI, WHO SERVED TOKUGAWA IEYASU, WAS HIS REINCARNATION

❖おことわり❖

この作品はフィクションです。
実在の人物・団体・事件などには一切関係ありません。
また、雑誌掲載時の時代を背景に描かれていますので、
現在の国名、単位表記と異なる表現がありますが、
あえてそのままとしました。ご了承ください。

❖初出単行本❖

一九九七年十一月二十五日　小社より刊行

解説

宗像先生、オトモします

田中芳樹
作家

何年か前に、ジェームス・ガーニーという人が『ダイノトピア　恐竜国漂流記』なる絵本を出した。私はその絵も物語も好きで、このたび映像化作品がDVDになったものをさっそく購入したのだが、残念ながら失望する結果に終わった。恐竜や都市景観など、映像的にはすばらしかったのだが、原作者の手を離れた物語が、ずいぶんと安っぽく、底の浅いものになっていたのだ。翼竜乗りの訓練のシーンなど、海兵隊の新兵のど根性物語をなぞっただけで苦笑させられたが、異文化というものに対する制作者サイドの理解力と想像力の貧困さがきわだつ結果となってしまった。

制作者サイドはスピルバーグ作品をねらったのかもしれないが、遠くおよばない。私はスピルバーグ作品をかならずしも好きではないが、スピルバーグはすくなくとも作品世界における成人（おとな）の役割を、きちんと心得ている。『ジュラシックパーク』にしても『バック・トゥー・ザ・フューチャー』にしても、事象を把握・説明する成人のキャラが主役級で

登場するではないか。映像作品『ダイノトピア』の物語の残念な失敗は、つまるところ、未熟な少年のキャラだけを出し、原作に登場する知的で沈着な父親の存在を抹殺したことにある。考えたくないが、カネと先端技術さえあればいいと思っていたのだろうか。

で、私がなぜ長々と『ダイノトピア』について述べたかというと、くやしいからである。『ダイノトピア』の原作のほうにまさるともおとらない恐竜テーマの傑作が日本にはちゃんとあるのに、これが映像化されないのは、何とも残念でならない。もちろん星野之宣さんの『ブルーホール』および『ブルー・ワールド』のことである。むろん映像化されればいいというものではないが、充分な資金と技術力を投入して大画面上に再現される星野ワールドを、やはり私は見てみたい。この姉妹作品には、知的精神的に未熟な未成年キャラの出しゃばる幕はない。華麗壮大なる星野ワールドへと読者をいざなってくれるのは、あくまでもオトナだ。チャールズ・ホーク博士の悪のヒーローぶりも、オトナなればこそだ。そして、ホーク博士と反対方向に立つオトナのヒーローとして、威風堂々と星野ワールドに登場したのが、東亜文化大学教授・宗像伝奇先生である。

私もいい年齢のオジサンになってしまったから、宗像伝奇氏とそれほど大きい年齢差はないはずだが、どうしても「先生」と呼びたくなってしまう。風格、迫力、貫禄。蓄積された知識の厚みと深み。眼前に展開する事態を把握し分析する知的腕力。ささやかな理想や善意の灯をともしつづける無名の人々に対する、朴訥な思いやり。弟子にしてほしいほ

ど、みごとなオトナぶりではないか。

星野さんは今後も魅力的な作品とキャラクターとを数多く生産なさるだろうが、成人男子キャラの造形という点において、宗像先生が頂点あるいはその近くに位置しつづけることはまちがいない。名前からして南方熊楠がモデルなのだが、オリジナルよりずっとダンディであるように思われる。妻子をなくしたオトコヤモメなのだが、不潔感はない。大学の研究室は資料の山で、いつ崩落しても不思議ではないが、日常生活は案外きちんと整頓されているようだ。若い女性から生理的にきらわれているようなシーンはまったく見られない。スキンヘッドや口髭の手入れもちゃんとしているようだし、若いころの姿を見ると、けっこう線の太い好男子である。亡くなった奥さんも清楚な美人だったようだ。何気ない小さなコマのひとつひとつに、宗像先生の人生が描きこまれていて、読者の微笑をさそうとともに、作品世界の奥行きを増す。

このシリーズは、星野さんの作品としてはじめて実写映像化された。劇場上映作ではなかったが、TVの二時間ドラマとしてはそう悪い出来でもなかった。むろん原作にはおよびようもないのだが、主演の高橋英樹も、黙って立っていれば、本物の宗像先生の影武者ぐらいつとまるかもしれない。できるならスキンヘッドにしてほしかったが。コミックを読まない人でもTVドラマを見ることはあるのだから、これによって宗像先生と星野ワールドの存在を知る人がひとりでも増えることは、やはり基本的に歓迎すべきことなのだ。

どんどん引きずりこまれ、深みにはまっていただきたいものである。いただきたい、といえば宗像先生自身、このごろ胆石に悩まされることがあるようで、独り身の中高年、健康にご留意あって、太く長くご活躍いただきたいもの。

さて、せっかく第三集の解説をおおせつかったのだから、この巻に収録されている作品のひとつひとつについて、不束ながら任を果たすべく、こころみるとしよう。

通算第十三話（ｆｉｌｅ．13）の『佐用姫の河』。佐賀県を舞台とした作品で、あえて分類すれば、「社会派的災害パニックもの」ということになるだろうか。登場する利権あさりの有力者たちは、いかにも類型的なようだが、類型的に描かれれば描かれるほどリアリティーが増す、というのが、巨大公共事業にむらがる地方政財界の救いがたい実状である。作品中に「亡者」と表現されているとおり、彼らは、主体的に自然を喰い物としているというより、自然を荒廃させずにはいられない何者かの強烈な悪念に憑かれた哀れなピエロのように見える。つい最近も、高速道路の建設をめぐって、多くのピエロがＴＶ画面上で踊りまわっていた。彼らの踊りは、見物人がいなくなるまで、この先も長くつづくのだろう。それまで幾人の天宮佐絵が、この社会には必要となることだろうか。宗像先生の粛然たる表情は、読者である私たちの思いでもある。

通算第十四、十五話（ｆｉｌｅ．14、15）の『彗星王』。これは伝奇ＳＦの、文字どおり王道。私もふくめ、クリエーターたちに対するお手本中のお手本で、優に長篇一冊分の

内容量がある。彗星の大接近による凶事の予感、旧い因縁、父の失踪、奇怪な政治力をそなえた一族の秘密、地下の遺跡に異次元への通路、人為をこえたカタストロフィ……間然するところがない。すべての要素を有機的に結合させ、解明に至る宗像先生の知的腕力もまたシリーズ・キャラクターのお手本である。ファンにとってはたまらないし、このシリーズをはじめて読む人にとっても、いわば基準となる作品であろう。ラスト二ページは、文章では表現しがたい視覚的余韻をのこす。

通算第十六話（ｆｉｌｅ．16）の『牛王の訪来』。初出の年次の干支が丑年であることにちなんだ作品だが、ささやかながら私にとってはじつに印象深いシーンがある。一二七ページ右下、宗像先生に同行する編集者の池麗美さんがつぎのようにいうシーンだ。

「もう！　宗像センセにかかると何でも外国から来たことになっちゃうんだから」

この台詞は、きわめて重大なものであると私には思われる。池さんというキャラに悪気はないのだが、この台詞によって、宗像先生との間に無意識の溝があることがわかってしまうのだ。

池さんの意識は、近代的な「国境」の概念に縛られてしまっている。国境の描かれていない地球儀を見たら、彼女は当惑するだろう。私たちはソビエト連邦の消失をリアルタイムで体験し、近代国家というものが人為的な製作物であって永遠の存在ではない、と知っているはずだ。それでもなお、海面や陸地に赤い線が引かれて、人や物の移動を規制し、

秩序立てている、それは過去においても未来においても不変のものだ、と思いこんでいる。

その点が宗像先生と決定的にちがうのだ。「意識が環境をこえる」という表現があるが、宗像先生からすれば、人も物も文化も災厄も、移動するのが当初からの正しい在りかた。国境のほうが後でできたのである。ことさら「こえる」必要など、宗像先生にはないのだ。このシーンは、宗像先生と作品世界との存在意義を強烈に象徴するものとして捨てがたい。

この文章を書いているとき、ニュースがはいった。アメリカで狂牛病（BSE）が発生し、牛肉の輸入が禁止されたのだ。偶然とはいえ、おどろいた。こういう事例に接すると、宗像先生がテーマの永遠性と今日性との双方を一身に体現した稀有なキャラであることを、あらためて納得させられる。

通算第十七話（file. 17）『瓜子姫殺人事件』は、ホラータッチのミステリーである。瓜子姫について研究している者は、私の大学の同期生にもいて、民俗学上ずいぶんと重要なテーマであるようだ。私はおさないころ瓜子姫の絵本に接したが、これがもろにアンハッピーエンドのもので、アマノジャクの不気味な姿とともに、かなり幼児には衝撃的だった。現在では教育的配慮とやらで、とても絵本にはできないだろう。幼児期の記憶がまざまざとよみがえるほど、ダークな雰囲気の一篇だが、犯人が被害者の亡霊を闇のなかに見出すシーンの迫力と説得力には脱帽させられる。かつて心理学の先生の本を読んだが、そこにはつぎのような意味のことが記されていた。

「幽霊は実在しない。だが、作中人物が幽霊を見る心理的メカニズムの迫力と説得力が増すほどに、その作品の文学的完成度は高くなる」

例にあげられていたのが『東海道四谷怪談』だが、この『瓜子姫殺人事件』にも通じる評語だと思われる。宗像先生の名探偵ぶりもおみごとで、現在のところまだ映像化されていないのが不思議なくらいだ。

通算第十八話（ｆｉｌｅ．18）の『酒呑童子異聞』。じつは今回あらためて読み返すまで、私はこの作品を前後篇だと思いこんでいた。記憶ちがいというだけのことだが、そう錯覚するほど、ボリューム感のある作品なのだ。

登場人物は宗像先生と謎の老僧の二名だけ、天変地異も怪犯罪もおこらず、京都の東郊から北郊の山間を歩きつづける両者の会話のみでストーリーが展開していく。シンプルきわまる構造なのに、このボリューム感は何だろう。酒呑童子伝説の形成に関する議論のおもしろさもさることながら、星野さんの作劇術の極地を見る思いがする。

Ａという食材にはＡ'という料理法、Ｂという食材にはＢ'という料理法。星野さんという稀代のスーパーシェフは、魚を切る包丁で肉を切ったりはしない。博学多識と処理技術との最高レベルでの両立が、どれほど創作活動を豊かにし、読者を喜ばせるか、生きた見本がここにある。このような作者および作品と、同時代に存在できる嬉しさは、筆舌（ひつぜつ）につくしがたい。星野ファン、宗像ファンは皆さん同じ思いだろう。

さて、最近、「宗像テイスト」で目立った本といえば、『1421』（ギャヴィン・メンジーズ著、ソニー・マガジンズ刊）ではなかろうか。コロンブスやマゼランより七十年以上前、新大陸の発見も世界周航も中国の大提督・鄭和（ていわ）によって実現されていたという内容だ。大胆な説で、学問的な検証はこれからだが、鄭和の名や業績はさらに広く知られるべきだと思うし、西欧中心主義の世界史をくつがえす学説がイギリス人によってとなえられたのもおもしろい。宗像先生も胆石なんかに負けてはいられない。ステッキを振りまわしつつ、地平の涯まで闊歩（かっぽ）していただきたい。どこまでもオトモさせていただきます。

二〇〇四年一月

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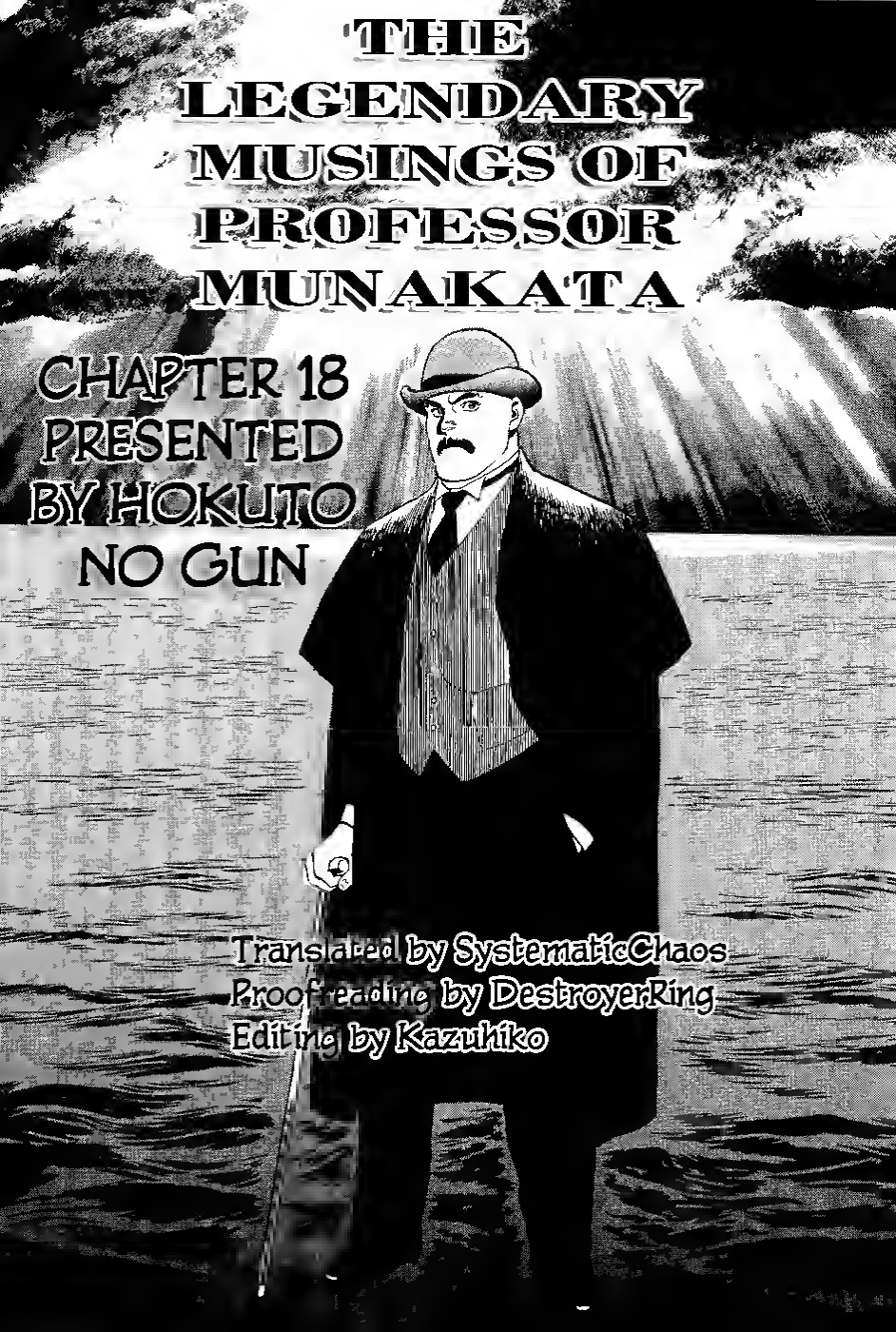
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 18

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



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